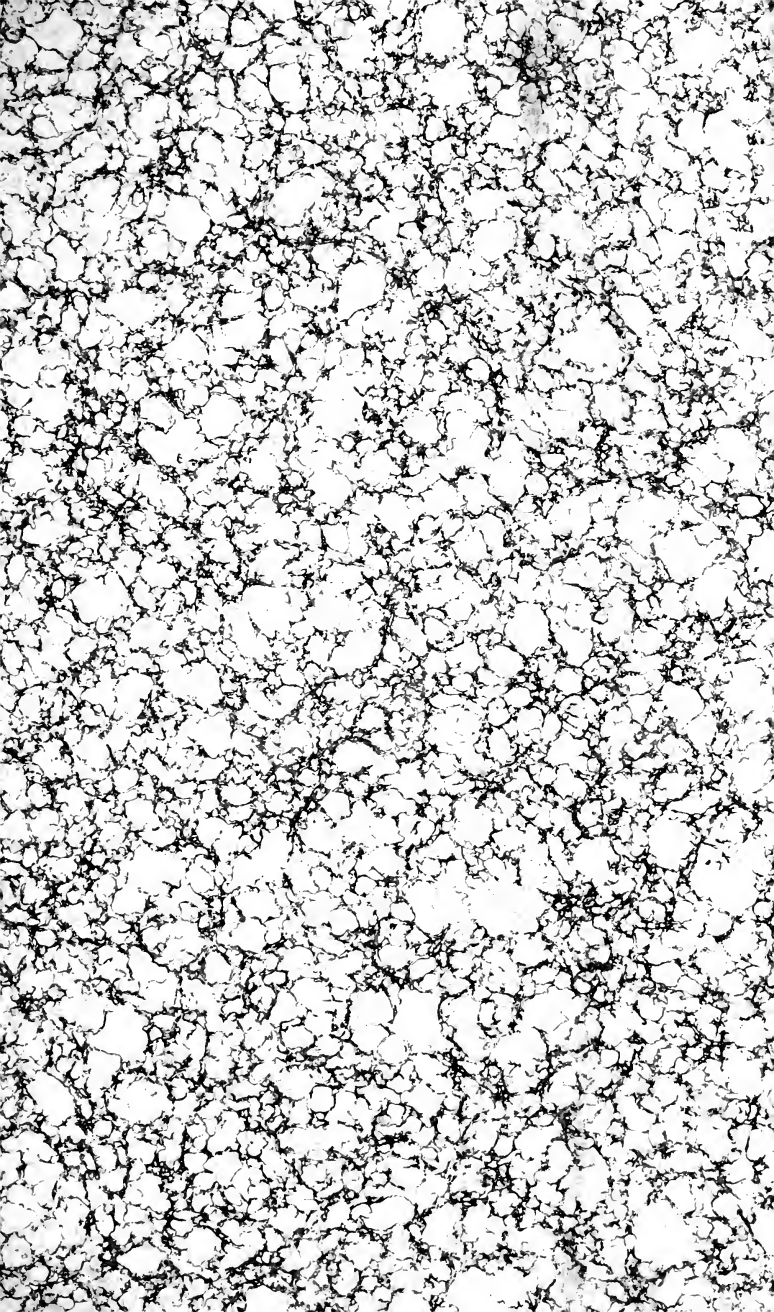




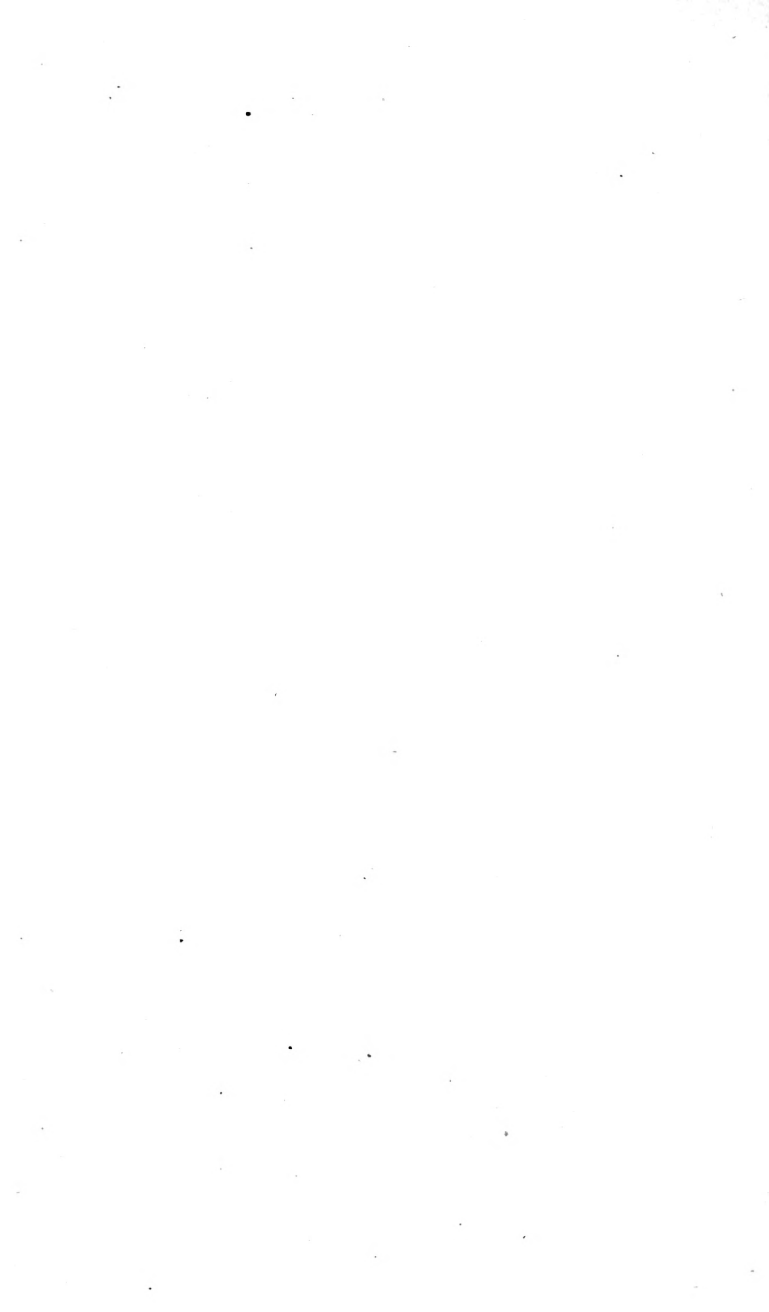
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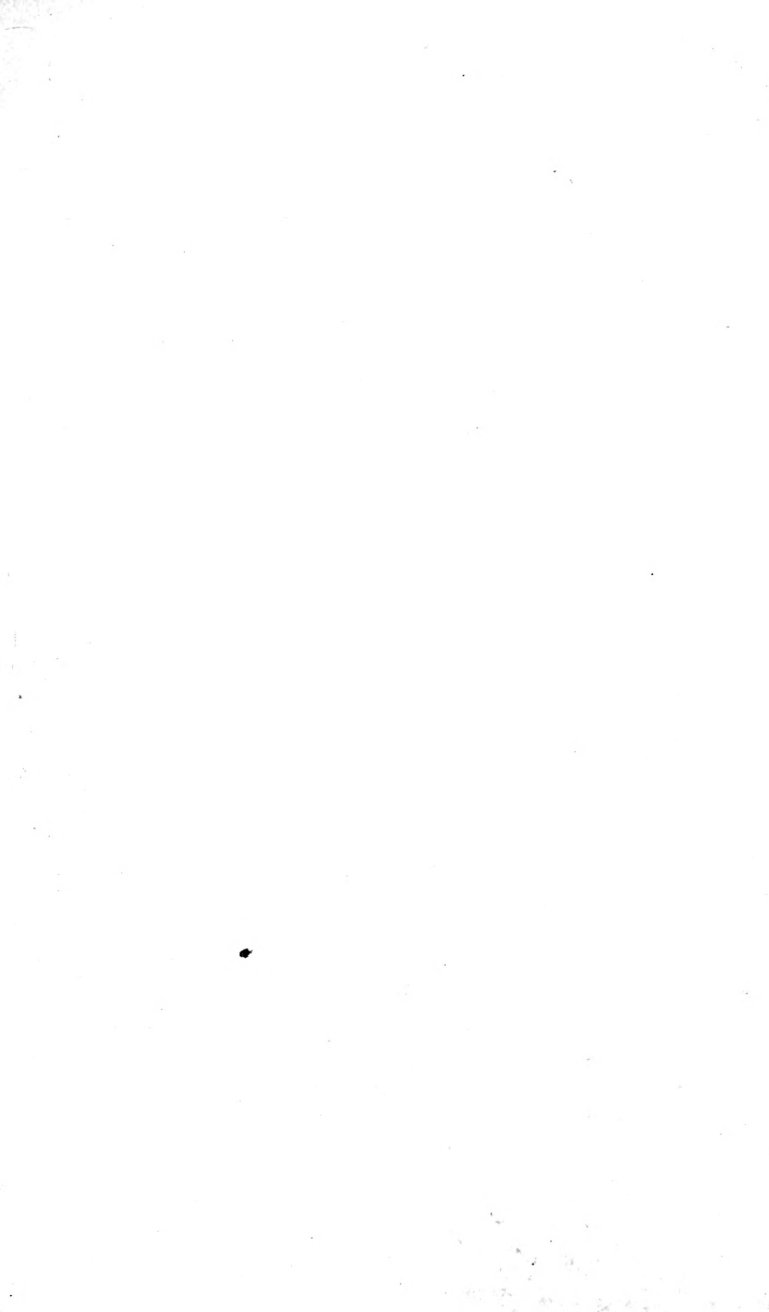
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THE GREAT HIGHWAY:

A STORY OF THE WORLD'S STRUGGLES.

BY S. W. FULLOM,

AUTHOR OF "THE MARVELS OF SCIENCE," &c. &c.

With Illustrations on Steel,

BY JOHN LEECH.

"There are more things in Heaven and Earth, Horatio,
Than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

SHAKSPEARE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

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TO
AUSTEN H. LAYARD, ESQ.,
M.P., D.C.L.,

THIS STORY
IS INSCRIBED,
IN ADMIRATION OF
HIS CHARACTER AND GENIUS,
AND AS A SLIGHT MARK
OF ESTEEM:

BY

THE AUTHOR.

ILLUSTRATIONS.

VOL. I.

GUILTY OR NOT GUILTY *Frontispiece.*

VOL. II.

THE RETURN *Frontispiece.*

VOL. III.

AN UNEXPECTED MEETING *Frontispiece.*

P R E F A C E.

THE success of my work on the Sciences, which, after reaching a seventh edition, still retains its place in public favour, and for which His Majesty the King of Hanover conferred upon me the Gold Medal of Honour as a mark of his gracious approbation, has emboldened me, in preparing a new book for publication, to take up a subject which, but for this result, I should have hesitated to approach, inasmuch as the details I have been constrained to introduce might be considered rather

as the morbid colouring suggested by disappointment than a faithful reflex of facts.

But at the present moment, when literature, as a profession, is depressed to the last degree, while an impression is abroad that nothing is easier than success, it may not be amiss to unveil some of the pitfalls that beset a literary career, not a few of which are unknown even to the generality of authors themselves. At the same time, there can be no hope that such a narrative will excite any kindly interest for men of letters in the breast of the nation; as an Englishman's sympathy for literature, when it is affected at all, notoriously amounts to no more than is expressed in the outcry for cheap books, by which an author is required to produce a new work at the price of an old reprint, or to compete with the shilling piracies of foreign

publications, which have so resistlessly invaded our shores.

In a country where literature is held in such small repute—where the author is contemned by the Government, too often victimized by the publisher, and looked upon as a lawful prey by the public—it is not to be expected that there should be any defined scheme of national education ; and in fact, while the despotic Executive of Russia maintains free schools for the poor in the wilds of Siberia, the great mass of the humbler classes in England are suffered to remain, as far as regards mental acquirements, in a state of nature, giving rise to an amount of crime and wickedness, which is daily becoming more formidable and more awful. Such is the result which Talfourd has just denounced with his last breath from the seat of judgment, as he

was cited, a terrible witness against us, before the Judgment-seat of Eternity.

The ablest pens have failed to arouse the Government to a right perception of these things; but, if they are continually brought forward, it may, in time, be led to concede measures from a feeling of shame, which it has denied at the call of religion, humanity, and justice.

S. W. F.

20, *Chalcot Terrace, Primrose Hill,*
April, 1854.

THE GREAT HIGHWAY.

CHAPTER I.

A RUNNING STREAM.

It was spring-time; but neither the day nor the scene—a bleak moor in North Wales—showed the least trace of that pleasant season, as it exists in imagination and tradition. One of those sharp, blustering days which March borrows from April, and which the month of showers is rarely loth to lend, threw its sombre and dreary impress, like a guilty scowl, over the whole face of nature. The heavens

were wrapped in cloud, though every now and then, the strong wind, with an irresistible gust, bared the sky to its fury. Then came a lull, till the blast gathered new force, and, sweeping down the uplands, rolled on like a peal of thunder.

The landscape was not without points of interest, though the general effect, when not enlivened by sunshine, was harsh and ungenial. A chain of heights, almost claiming to be mountains, fell in rugged steeps to the moor, which stretched far away on every side. The hills were bleak and sterile, but, here and there, a thin coat of verdure, or a straggling wood, running down to the edge of the moor, relieved their monotony, and gave their wildness a touch of grandeur. Gorges and ravines broke the hardness of the outline, and presented, at intervals, those peculiar obstructions which are best discerned by a military eye, and are only

available in strategy. These fastnesses, indeed, had once afforded the ancient Britons an asylum from the arms of Rome ; and here long afterwards their hardy descendants, in times scarcely less barbarous, maintained their nationality and independence against all the power of England's kings.

In the distance, a handsome mansion, perched on the spur of a hill, and surrounded by a well-wooded park, commanded the whole prospect, and formed a conspicuous object for miles round. Though a modern erection, it occupied the site of an ancient manor-house, called Glynn's Keep, which had for ages been the patrimony of the same race ; and the new residence, while it presented little resemblance to the old, retained the familiar designation. In feudal ages, the Keep had been one of the strongholds of the country ; and the olden Glynnns had

manned it well, and won an honourable place in local traditions. Though now unavailable for military purposes, it was still, as the residence of an opulent landed proprietor, a place of importance ; and a long, straggling village, with the unpronounceable appellation of Cwm-Glynnellan, crept, as in ancient days, round the skirt of the park, an appanage and dependency of its lord.

Some five miles from the village, on the bank of a swift and deep stream, much increased in width by unusually heavy rains, rose a small marquee, protected in the rear by a clump of trees, which served as an effectual barrier to the wind. A flaunting pennant streamed from the top of the tent, and, in strange discord with this display, each of its sides was emblazoned, in large letters, with these words :

“ THE TABERNACLE OF THE LORD.”

About forty or fifty persons, of both sexes, were congregated in various small clusters, near the tent, and a couple of carts and a donkey-chaise stood by, while the liberated beasts of burden browsed over the moor. The gathering was chiefly composed of the labouring class, though it included two or three small farmers, so numerous in this part of Wales, and who were the proprietors of the vehicles just mentioned. All had a strange and peculiar look, which, taken in connexion with the inscription on the tent, furnished a clue to the object of their meeting, and left no doubt on the mind that they were a convocation of fanatics. Such indeed they were !

It is a strange anomaly that the nineteenth century, with its advanced and advancing civilization, should have given birth, in the midst of a community of Christians, to a religious imposture

rivalling in success that of Mahomet, and not unlike in its main characteristics. The sect of Mormons, or Latter-day Saints, is at once the miracle and the scandal of our age. Founded by an obscure and illiterate individual, whose mental and personal endowments were equally mean, possessing no claim to respect, and being without even the recommendation of originality, it has achieved an ascendancy which can only be accounted for by the world-wide prevalence of ignorance and superstition, or, what is hardly a less painful consideration, by man's inherent tendency to error.

Like the impostor of the East, Joe Smith, the American seer, made his earliest converts in his own family. To them he first announced the existence of the Book of Mormon, revealed to him, as he said, by a direct interposition of the Redeemer, and solemnly characterised as a supplement to

the Gospel. So far, the deception was evidently suggested by the bible of Ludovick Muggleton, and the book itself has been recognised as a clumsy Indian romance, the manuscript of which, after it had been thrown aside as worthless, was surreptitiously obtained by Smith from the widow of a bookseller. Special revelations, not wanting in quaintness and force, have from time to time been added to the new Koran, just as successive communications were made to Mahomet; and, indeed, the Mormon prophet has followed his Eastern prototype so closely, that a revelation has always been at hand, as a divine commission, to abet whatever purpose he sought to accomplish. Thus he was enabled to regulate the ordinances and discipline of his church, constituting himself, as high-priest and prophet, its supreme head, both in temporal and spiritual affairs, and creating an hierarchy of twelve apostles,

and a perfect host of elders, to whom the government of the various congregations is confided.

The groups assembled on Glynnellan moor were awaiting the appearance of one of the Apostles, now ensconced in the tent, and who had lately come over from America to confirm their faith, and take measures for converting the whole kingdom. He was to begin his work by baptizing a neophyte, at this moment under examination in the tabernacle, preparatory to her admission into the church ; and who was herself looked upon as no mean prize.

The apostle had entered a fruitful field, long left to fallow in rank luxuriance. Ignorance the most profound, superstition only to be matched in the dark ages, and an absolute unconsciousness of moral restraint, characterised the entire mass of the peasantry ; and as a plague rises

in the haunts of poverty, but spreads to richer abodes, so the infection was gradually attacking their superiors. In this remote spot no good Samaritan ever came, Bible in hand, to pour the oil and wine of religious truth into souls perishing by the wayside. The people were left in the wilderness, and there was no Moses at their head. What wonder that, in their desperation, they danced and sung round the calf of Mormonism !

The heresy, at first springing up like a weed, had struck its roots down into the soil like an oak. True, its more repulsive features were not yet unmasked ; and the “ spiritual wife ” doctrine, in which it wholly uncovers the cloven foot, was, at this time, broached very cautiously even in America. The English flock, therefore, had some excuse for their credulity. There is a craving in the human mind for religion ; and if left without it, men will

turn Nature herself into a fetish. To the benighted peasantry of the West, the new creed, preached by pastors as homely as themselves, appeared, in their spiritual destitution, to be a message from Heaven ; and, though its earliest adherents were the lowest poor, it quickly soared higher, and brought down several proselytes from the grades above.

“Gat a rare cold day for Miss to go in stream,” observed a sturdy, athletic labourer to a stolid farmer who stood next to him. “Her be uncommon weakly, too.”

“If’s for the good of her soul, us munt fret about body,” answered the farmer, sullenly.

“Sartin, that’s about it,” remarked an asthmatic old dame, shivering before the keen east wind, and whose well-worn scarlet cloak wrapped closely round her, and peaked nose and chin, almost meet-

ing at their extremities, had a very witch-like appearance. "Brother Clinton he know how many beans make a packle : he know who make it roight for the saints—eh, brother ! don't 'ee?"

Farmer Clinton, who was remarkable for his taciturnity, took no notice of this address.

"If water's chill, we'se know what make it wairm," observed a gaunt blacksmith. "Moreover, I'n sooner unny time stairve o' cold than burn in everlastin' fire."

"Love to hear an he talk this like," returned old Thirza Wemyss. "It do ane's hairt good when it blow so."

"Howsomedever, be reether shairp to go in stream," persisted the first speaker.

"Not an's in baptism," said the old woman. "Bless 'ee, brother, I'se ha a dip mysel, anan the elder tell I. I feel's gat a fire in my banes, and the water ud put

un out. I guess what it be—it's all come o' the evil ane, I know."

Here another old woman, who had approached unobserved, uttered a groan.

"Ah! bless us, sister Jail, how 'ee make I stairt, 'ee do," cried Thirza.

Jail Bird—for such was the old woman's strange name—drew down her face, but said nothing.

"Ugh!" pursued her weird sister: "how he do wrought in me. I could strip stark, and jump in stream for sport."

"You'se make no such wark here, my woman," cried the blacksmith: "so an you feel the leaven in 'ee, go your ways aff. You need be rampin' again, as 'ee wor last Sabbath, eh? Go aff wi ye, ar you'se get yoursel clap out o' church."

Thirza hailed this threat with a laugh, ringing out like a shriek.

"You's old Tom Withers!" she ex-

claimed. “ I’s e have ’ee aff, too, brother Tom, nan I go, and you’n nail a horse-shoe an my body, to keep *he* away.”

At this point, an old man, who understood what was passing, without being able himself to speak English, burst forth with the fine Welsh anthem :—

“ Yr ’w yn diolch i ti, yr
Holl-alluog Dduw, am yr efengyl sanctaidd.
Pan yr ocddem ni, muen
Carchar twyll du, rhoes t’i
Ni oleuni nefol.

Halleluia !”

As the singer ceased, another groan broke from old Jail, who edged close up to Thirza Wemyss.

“ Anan ! sister Jail’s hold forth in the tongue, I know,” screamed Thirza, “ and that do make he wroughten like mad.”

“ I’s e have the ’postle cast un out an ’ee, if airnt quiet,” exclaimed the blacksmith. “ He’s wash un out pretty sprack,

and better wash un out than burn un out. Amen!"

As he uttered these words, Jail, whose features had been working convulsively for some minutes, suddenly poured forth a torrent of gibberish, strongly resembling Welsh, but which, in fact, was a mere jumble of gutturals, as unintelligible to herself as her auditors. The "outspeaking," as it is termed by the sect, affected Thirza Wemyss differently from what she had anticipated; and she instantly became dumb, while an expression of terror fell on the whole assemblage.

Jail had just come to a pause, when the folds of the tabernacle were thrown aside, giving egress to Elder Trevor, a tall, lank, bald-headed man, with gloomy, protruding eye-brows, and a hare lip, who was followed by a figure that might have passed for Orson, so completely did it realise humanity in a state of nature.

This strange being, who immediately became the centre of all eyes, wore no clothing but a girdle of goat-skin, fastened by a cord round his loins; and, by his dress and functions, claimed to represent John the Baptist. Coarse brown hair fell in matted locks over his shoulders; his eyes were almost buried under their shaggy brows; and a moustache and beard covered his lips and chin. His ill-shapen limbs, partly overgrown with hair, heightened the repulsiveness of his aspect, and gave him more the appearance of a satyr than a saint. But, to the vulgar eye, his very hideousness was a mantle of sanctity; and he was instantly recognised as Noah Snow, the missionary from America, and one of the twelve apostles.

The apostle was only a step in advance of the convert, a young girl, enveloped in a woollen cloak, the hood of which was drawn over her head, partly shrouding

her face, though affording a glimpse of features which, if now pale and abstracted, were both pretty and interesting. She was accompanied by two women, one on either side, by whom, according to the tenor of the Mormon formulary, she was supposed to be presented to the church. An old man, bearing a long white rod, in imitation of the rod of Aaron, and ranking in the community of saints as a deacon of the Aaronitic order, closed the procession.

At the brink of the stream, the party paused, and the bystanders, on a signal from the deacon, gathered round, when Elder Trevor mounted a low stool, and, amidst profound silence, wrestled with himself in prayer, denouncing the stubbornness and wickedness of the world, and extolling the holiness of the saints, whom he commended to the especial protection of the Deity, concluding with the recital

of a hymn, well known to the assemblage, and which, being rehearsed by the Elder, verse by verse, was chaunted to the tune of "The Sea" by the whole congregation.

When the hymn was finished, the apostle, impatient to take the lead, followed the Elder with an harangue, referring slightly to the occasion which had brought them together, and then expatiating on the general prospects of the faith. These, not without reason, he declared to be full of promise, and confidently anticipated the approach of a Millenium, when the Latter-Day Saints would have the whole world at their feet. Though wild and vehement, his language manifested both tact and ability, and was eminently calculated to impress an ignorant and credulous audience. The subject-matter, too, entirely coincided with their tastes and wishes, making no reference to the duty owing to God and

man—to the obligations of morality, or the sacred precepts of religion ; nor, on the other hand, seeking to soothe the sorrows and trials of life by the assurance of a glorious futurity. All its boast—all its hopes, were of the present ; and the preacher enlisted the sympathies of his hearers through their temporal and earthly interests. Finally, he spoke of the Mormon settlement in America—of its rapid progress and constantly increasing resources, describing, in terms exaggerated, but none the less striking, the fields and vineyards, woods and plantations, farms and pastures, of a land flowing with milk and honey, which he represented to be the immediate result of the Lord's blessing on his Saints. And, more than all, he dwelt on the glories of its chief city, the new Jerusalem, which had sprung up, as by enchantment, in those once pathless solitudes ; and of its

world-renowned temple, whither all mankind must one day go up to worship.

For more than an hour did the fanatic hold forth, becoming more and more excited, till, at last, he raised his voice to a distressing pitch, while his eyes gleamed with a lurid light, strongly suggestive of insanity. Every word, however, of the mad oration told sensibly on those whom it addressed, and when he got down exhausted, there was not a soul present but thought he had been listening to the voice of an Elias.

After an instant's pause, the apostle walked deliberately into the midst of the stream, and awaited the convert, who, now denuded of her cloak, and wearing only a long bathing-dress, followed him into the river. He seized her arm as, with timid, hesitating steps, she approached, and drew her towards him, till the water was above her waist. Then he

immersed her head, and was drawing back towards the bank, when his foot stumbled, and they fell together beneath the surface. For a moment they splashed about in the water, which became a perfect whirl around them—like another Bethesda, but, at length, the apostle succeeded in regaining his feet, leaving the convert invisible.

“Miss be sunk, I do think,” observed Jack Davis, the labourer, to Farmer Clinton. “I’se jest peel aff my smack, and help the ’postle out wi’ her.”

“Do, lad,” replied the farmer, aroused from his apathy, and himself stepping to the brink of the stream.

“Stand back!” cried the fanatic, observing their purpose. “What would you do? Can’t you observe, with your eyes open, what a miracle is here? The young woman’s possessed, and the serpent’s coming out of her. I see him now

with his lightning-blazing orbs, raging like fire. How he would have tripped me up, only for the grace within. Well! I could now find in my heart to give him forty stripes save one, Scripture measure! But he's casting loose! he's coming out!"

"But hadn't us best lift her head up a bit?" asked the uneasy father.

"No, I say," returned the American: "if you meddle, you'll undo all. Let him alone, and he'll soon have enough. Yea, this is truly a miracle!"

"A miracle!" echoed the deluded crowd, their eyes rivetted on the troubled water.

"Don't you see the poor creature's drowning?" cried a voice from the opposite bank.

And, without waiting to observe the effect of his words, the speaker plunged into the stream, and raised the girl in his arms.

Apparently unconscious, she still clung, with convulsive tenacity, to her deliverer, who, taking no heed of the apostle, bore her unmolested to the bank. Few, indeed, could now blind themselves to her critical condition, and several women tendered their assistance, while her father, with some appearance of excitement, followed them into the tent.

CHAPTER II.

THE FARMER'S DAUGHTER.

ERNEST GLYNN, who had so opportunely effected the young girl's rescue, was the grand-nephew of the landed proprietor of the district—Old Squire Glynn, a bachelor, infirm in health and temper, and extremely violent in his antipathies. Many years before, his only brother, after running through his fortune, had died suddenly, leaving two orphan children, who had no protector but himself. One of these, the father of Ernest, had, to the Squire's great chagrin, married clandes-

tinely the daughter of a farmer, and, on the fact coming to light, had been peremptorily discarded. Poverty and disappointment, developing the germs of incipient disease, had hurried the poor fellow into a decline, and he was snatched from life while yet on the threshold of manhood. His broken-hearted widow did not long survive, and their son, the only fruit of the ill-assorted match, being too young to provide for himself, had fallen to the care of the Squire, who, however, brought him up more as a dependent than a relation. Even this measure of grace had been much opposed by the son of the other brother, who was some ten years the boy's senior, and, from the breach in the family, had, since the death of his own father, considered himself the Squire's heir—a circumstance which caused him to regard the new-comer with extreme jealousy and apprehension. But

the boy, whose engaging appearance had excited these feelings, did not gain much in his uncle's favour, the unforgiven offence of his father being visited upon him, and, as he grew up, no attention was paid to his education, beyond sending him to a grammar-school at Liverpool, where he remained till his fifteenth year, when, returning home, he was left to employ his time as he pleased.

Having seen the neophyte carried into the tent, Ernest Glynn had but just time to observe that some of the congregation bent on him looks not particularly friendly, when he was accosted by a man mounted on a strong, handsome pony, who had just ridden up, and whom he recognised as his uncle's bailiff.

The horseman, who pushed unceremoniously into the midst of the throng, was

short and thick-set, with a broad, full face, to which heavy and massive features gave a remarkably sinister character. A well-worn white hat, showing more than one blemish, was stuck on the back of his head, exposing an ample crop of red locks in front: his bull-like neck was encircled by a bandanna handkerchief, and a velvet shooting-jacket, of the gamekeeper cut, with corduroy breeches and gaiters, encasing legs somewhat bowed, completed his costume.

“What, Master Ernest, have they been baptizing you, too?” he said, observing his dripping clothes. “Why, how long have you been a saint?”

“As you’re quite in the other interest, you can feel no curiosity to know,” replied Ernest, in a tone that repelled further inquiry.

“Hoity-toity, we’re very grand; *we* are!” muttered Frost, who, more curious

than he cared should be seen, sought an explanation from the bystanders.

Ernest, indeed, was in no mood for raillery, even if he had been on more friendly terms with his assailant. The spectacle before him had awakened the most serious feelings, both of pity and shame, for not a few of those present, the avowed adherents of a gross delusion, were his uncle's tenantry. Apart from the exhibition he had witnessed, there was something awful in the aspect of the assemblage—the face of each individual reflecting, in different characters, the same dense look of obtuseness and ignorance, in some associated with terror, in others with the deep lines of a stern fanaticism—which depressed and appalled him. A confusion of tongues arose, as the farmer's daughter was carried off; and the apostle, enraged that his functions had been interfered with, was about to administer a severe

rebuke to Ernest, when he was intercepted by old Thirza Wemyss, who thrust herself between them.

“ He’s gane out o’ she, and gat in I,” cried the beldame. “ I feel un all ower like fire. Hilloa, old Captain ! I’s e Cain, as slew his brother Abel, and the blood’s on my han’ yet. You can’t do aught wi’ I, old Captain. I’s e mock at you, and old Jail Bird, too !”—And she gave a scream which brought all the congregation round them.

“ This is a marvellous thing,” cried the apostle, addressing the assemblage. “ I never knew the power of darkness so strong as this, that he could go from one body to another at his will. It’s a warning to us, my brethren, against falling into transgression, or the same thing may come upon ourselves. Behold how the leaven works in this woman, who is one of our own fold. But I must show him

he aint master yet!—No!”—And he added to the old crone—“So you’re Cain, are you?”

“Cain yoursel,” cried Thirza. “I’s Kilo.”

“You, Kilo!—you’n old Thirz Wemyss, you fool,” exclaimed the blacksmith, stepping up. “She were makin’ jest the same fash last Sabbath, and all the neighbours up to hear an her, and——”

But here the apostle, bent on displaying his gift of exorcism, pushed the smith back, and he fell discomfited to the rear.

“So you’re Kilo now?” he then said to the woman: “Cain one minute and Kilo the next. But you know me, don’t you?”

“You’s old Captain—you’s Noah Snow, from ’merikey, where the blacks be,” shrieked Thirza. “But I’s laugh you to scorn, old Noah. You’s can’t drive aff a head o’ seventy, like I. Ugh! ugh! who’s care for old Noah?”

“ I’ll make you care, Kilo or Cain, or whoever you be,” returned the apostle—
“ yea, if you were a chief of seventy thousand, instead of seventy. But you’re not Kilo, nor Cain, you’re Lucifer. Now I charge you to say if this is your real name.”

“ Well, it be,” replied Thirza. “ I’se Lucifer. But you won’t cast I loose. You’se doubtin’ yoursel—you cairnt, you cairnt!”—And she tossed up her arms, and jumped about, laughing like a maniac.

“ This is more and more marvellous,” cried the apostle, “ and shows these spirits know what is passing in our minds ; for just as this fallen one spoke, I was verily doubting. But I will buckle on my armour for the fight, and will wrestle, even to the cutting off of this woman from the church, if such be forced upon me ; for so it is advised by our beloved brother Hyde, who is a name of terror to the evil ones.”

He was silent for a moment, when he, in his turn, threw up his arms, and in a long, rambling harangue—for it could not be called a prayer—invoked Heaven to strengthen and sustain him, while he made manifest the glory of the new covenant. Meanwhile, Thirza continued to jump round him, in a sort of circle, laughing, screaming, and singing, or calling him and the bystanders the most opprobrious names, followed by frightful imprecations, till, at length, it was not difficult to believe that the power of evil did really possess her. At this juncture, the apostle finished his prayer, to which the congregation responded by a sonorous “Amen!”

“Now, Cain, Kilo, or Lucifer, I’m ready to give you battle,” said the apostle to Thirza. “Now you shall come out of this woman, or you shall show you have a better right to her than the church. Now——”

“ Hadn’t us best hold her down, brother, for the evil one is powerful strong in her,” said Elder Trevor.

“ Ah, ay, hold her—bind her with cords,” cried the apostle.

But no one seemed willing to undertake the task, and Thirza was jumping about wilder than ever, when Jail Bird, who alone looked quite unconcerned, pinioned her arms, which not only brought her to a stand, but seemed to stun and paralyze her. Ernest turned away in disgust and horror, just as the farmer’s daughter, whom he had seen carried off insensible, was coming out of the tent, now clothed in her ordinary attire, though her blanched cheek, and a languor in her eyes, still showed traces of her immersion. Her father stood by, with his stolidity and impassiveness perfectly restored, while one of the women, the wife of another farmer, pointed out Ernest as her deliverer. But at the moment, Ernest’s

face wore such a stern expression, that the girl, after making a step towards him, half drew back, though the surprise he evinced at her superior appearance, touching one of the weak points of her character, instantly reassured her. Before, there had been a sort of bewilderment in her look, as if her mind were still dwelling on her recent escape, but now she approached Ernest with a grace and self-possession far above her station, combined with a modesty none the less apparent from being untarnished by bashfulness.

“It is to you I owe my life, sir,” she said. “If you had not helped me when you did, I should have been drowned ; for I had lost all power of helping myself.”

“So I feared,” replied Ernest, his disagreeable impressions vanishing at the modulated tones of her voice. “But I hope you have sustained no injury.”

“Not the least. It appears I was

more frightened than hurt, though, but for you, the fright would have killed me. But you are wet through. I'm afraid you won't escape so well."

And she spoke aside to her father.

"Young gen'lman's welcome, I'n sure," said the farmer, thus aroused. "Come home with we, sir, do, and dry your clars."

"Thank you, if it's anywhere near, I shall be glad," replied Ernest.

"It's at the Blynt farm, sir, and all in your road—if you're going back to the Keep to-night," returned Jessie—as the young girl was named. "And you can have a horse to take you home, as soon as you're rested."

"You don't take any notice of me, Jessie," observed Frost, pushing up to them. "Are you going to give up your old friends?"

"Not my friends," replied Jessie, with

an emphasis on the word, though she seemed to shrink as she spoke.

“You aint got me on the list, then,” returned Frost. “Come, that isn’t kindly, Jess—dashed if it is! But you wenches are all for new faces.”—And he said to Ernest, in an under tone—“Better mind what you’re at, Master Ernest. The squire won’t be above pleased to hear of your gallivantin’ with a tenant’s daughter, you may depend. You’ll take my nag, and go straight on, if you’re wise.”

“I want neither your nag nor your advice,” replied Ernest, resenting both his familiarity and interference. “I shall know how to account for my conduct, if my uncle requires an explanation.”

Here Jack Davis led up the cart, and Ernest, not sorry of an opportunity of seeing something more of the better sort of these strange fanatics, whose creed and principles were then comparatively un-

known, got into the front seat, with Jessie and her father, while Jack clambered in behind, and the vehicle drove off.

The road, which ran over one angle of the moor, was of the most execrable description,—torn with deep ruts, and, here and there, broken with holes, now filled with rain, rendering it almost impassable. Nevertheless, they had scarcely gone a hundred yards, when they came to a turnpike, and drew up, in a perfect pool of water, to have the gate opened.

“That’s number one,” observed Jack Davis, as they drove through, for the first time breaking the silence of the party—for the presence of Ernest, so near a relative of Clinton’s landlord, had been a sort of constraint. “Sartin, there never wor such a country for pikes as ourn. Cairnt go to next fiel’, on your own fairm, but what ’ee come smack agen a pike.”

"Isn't this a new gate?" asked Ernest. "I haven't been round here for a long time, but I don't remember a gate then."

"Oh, no! grewed up in no time, sir," answered Jack. "Don't take long to grow a pike, do it, maister?"

"Shoots up quicker nor nettles," replied Clinton, who, dense in everything else, was oracular on the subject of turn-pikes. "Quickset's nothin' to 'em, and they'n beat mushrooms to bits. If the cairn 'ud only grow as quick as pikes, we'd have a rare good hairvest—uncummon."

"Sometimes they's took down, though, as clean as the carn be," observed Jack, with a grin.

A pause followed this sally, though the farmer, who never laughed, seemed, by a rolling motion of his eyes, both to sanction and appreciate it.

"Mother Rebecca never comes among

us," said Ernest at length, "and I believe the magistrates have taken measures to give her a warm reception if she does show her face."

"Her were at Durnbridge gate last night, sir," answered Jack, "and I heard say her swore'd han down all the pikes in parish. Shairn't take on grievous for pikes, if's the whoole bunch gone. But, bless my hairt! here us be at t'other gate—number two!"

Another heavy toll was paid, before the gate, secured with bolt and bar, was thrown open, to give passage to the vehicle. A quarter of a mile further on, they arrived at the farmer's homestead, an antiquated house of freestone, with a tiled gable roof, latticed windows, and a large roomy porch. Here old Clinton, who was not wanting in the hospitality proverbially associated with his calling, though boorish in his words and manners,

led the way to an old-fashioned parlour, while Jessie retired to her own room.

Farmer Clinton's parlour had little to distinguish it from the ordinary best room of a Welsh farm-house of the better grade. The low ceiling, as in all the domiciles inherited from our ancestors, was crossed by a massive beam, which persons of any stature were apt to learn first from its coming in contact with their heads. On opposite sides of the apartment were two doors, opening respectively to the passage and to an inner bedroom, and on another, one corner was occupied by an eight-day clock and its fellow by a glass cupboard, disclosing through its bright upper panes a goodly array of glass and china. Various Scripture pieces, gorgeously coloured, and inclosed in faded gilt frames, hung, together with a weather-glass, on the white-washed walls, and a table, with its leaf turned down, and covered with

green baize, supported a tea-board equally gay, reared up like a picture. There were no other attempts at ornament, beyond a shepherd and shepherdess of china on the high wooden chimney-piece, with a jug in the centre, containing a bouquet of early flowers.

Jessie soon reappeared, and having prepared tea, Ernest was easily prevailed upon to remain ; but the farmer, for whose taste the ambrosial beverage had no charms, availed himself of the opportunity to retire to the kitchen, where a tankard of ale and a pipe offered far greater attractions.

A change had come over Jessie during her short absence, decidedly to her advantage. Her cheek was no longer pale, nor her eye dim, and to say truth, she had not been neglectful of the little arts of dress. In such a secluded life as hers, a visitor of Ernest's stamp was no common

incident, and putting its peculiar associations aside, was in itself calculated to draw out the latent sympathies of her character. This, nevertheless, was not an easy achievement, and on ordinary occasions she might have passed for a Quietist, so still and imperturbable was her manner ; but her placidity, the effect rather of circumstances than of disposition, covered strong and eager feelings, only overruled by her power of repression. Naturally gentle, patient, and enduring, the want of a guiding and ruling principle, the absence of any restraint but her own will, had left her susceptible of the worst influences, and the most baneful impressions. It was her misfortune that she had early been deprived of her mother, and the selfish temperament and limited capacity of her remaining parent, rarely looking beyond his own immediate wants, were ill adapted to fulfil the tender

functions of that endearing connexion. She had grown up, therefore, in a sort of wild independence, which might have developed the most vicious tendencies, if a relation of her mother's, moving in a higher walk of life, had not accidentally become aware of her situation, and placed her under the discipline of a London boarding-school. Here she remained for some years, almost forgotten by her inert father, till, at the age of sixteen, she lost these advantages by the death of her protectress, and was removed from the capital to preside over the economy of a small Welsh farm. Though she became at once the pride and the guide of her father, receiving from him all the affection of which his nature was capable, the change was too great, and too disheartening, to be met with resignation, particularly as she felt no interest, after the first novelty had worn off, in the occupations and

duties of her new course of life, for which, indeed, her education, as well as a delicate constitution, wholly unfitted her. Thus there was nothing to relieve the monotony of her existence, and being without the resource of books, companions, or example, her mind had gradually discarded the tutelary impressions acquired at school, and become contracted and perverted. Especially her views of religion grew more and more vague, till, at last, in her craving for novelty and excitement, heightened by the spiritual destitution prevalent in that part of the principality, she had accompanied her father to the gatherings of the Mormons. Here she was considered such an acquisition, and was received with such homage—a tribute especially to her taste—that the proceedings interested both her vanity and her ambition ; and, after a few compunctious

doubts, stimulated by the example of her father, and flattered and cajoled on all sides, she finally entered the sect.

The influence absent in Jessie was a ruling one in Ernest. Though not what would be called a religious character—for he wore no phylactery—religion was, in fact, his presiding sentiment, developing itself in his heart in one of its most beautiful forms, as a constant recognition of the providence and omnipresence of God. Like Jessie, he was without companions of his own station, Mr. Glynn being, with one exception, the only resident gentleman in the neighbourhood; but his isolation was productive neither of *ennui* nor gloom. Earnest in character, as well as name—thoughtful, diligent, and inquisitive, with little taste for the ordinary field-sports of country life, except as an occasional recreation, no

small part of his time was devoted to the study and contemplation of nature ; and severed, as it were, from his equals in the social scale, sensible that he was looked upon by the rich as an interloper rather than a companion, and hence avoiding their ungracious fellowship, he was seen as often among the poor, in the mine, the foundry, and the village, as in his uncle's hall. This result had been attributed to a predilection for low company, natural in the offspring of a *mésalliance* ; but, go where he might, his mind preserved his innocence, as an inalienable part of itself ; and if he acquired a touch of rusticity in his rambles, there was a native grace and suavity in his manner, which always proclaimed him a gentleman.

Jessie at once recognized his superiority, quite apart from his relationship to Mr. Glynn ; and all her taste for better society reviving, felt half ashamed of her con-

nexion with the Mormons. Still she was drawn to the subject, as if to make her situation appear less equivocal and invidious.

"Have you ever been at a Mormon meeting before, Mr. Glynn?" she asked as they sat down.

"No," he replied. "It was quite by accident I witnessed this one, having only strolled over from Glynnellan for a walk."

"You don't think much of our Church, I dare say?" she added doubtfully. "People have a prejudice against it, the same as the Jews had against our Saviour."

"I must confess I share it, if it is a prejudice," said Ernest, somewhat shocked by the parallel. "There is no resemblance between the pretensions of your leader and the mission of our Saviour. He came lowly indeed, but armed with wondrous powers, to fulfil a thousand prophecies,

while he enlightened and redeemed the world. If your leader could show similar credentials, he would not want disciples."

"He already numbers thousands," replied Jessie, "and, it is said, the whole world will join him soon. But, at present, they shut their eyes, and judge without hearing, as they too often do."

"I have both heard and seen, and it has only confirmed my previous opinion," rejoined Ernest: "the exhibition of to-day was surely sufficient testimony."

Jessie coloured.

"If you mean baptism by immersion," she said, "that was the practice of the first Christians, as shown in the Testament."

"I don't refer to that, which is too nice a point for me to settle—though it is not what I believe. But the whole scene—the howling women, the fanatical crowd, and the raving preacher—seemed

to me worse than a mockery. And if it was painful to see the ignorant ensnared by such a delusion, much more was it to see respectable and sensible people give it their adhesion. You, for instance—if you will pardon my saying so—ought never to have joined such a sect.”

“Perhaps I wouldn’t, if any one had told me not,” returned Jessie, a little disconcerted, “but I was over-persuaded. I didn’t like joining them at first; but, somehow, it became more natural. And it’s too late to think about it now.”

“It’s never too late. You can’t really believe in this imposture; and if you want advice, let me entreat you to apply to the curate at Glynnellan, and, I am sure, he will gladly give you every instruction.”

“He’s an interested party—all the clergy are. Besides, they’d scoff at me now, if I were to draw back.”

“*They* scoff!—those miserable fanatics!

Surely you needn't care what *they* think. If you care for the opinion of others, in such a question as this, you should rather dread the scoffs of educated and intelligent people." And as another flush suffused Jessie's face, he added in a tone of apology:—"I'm afraid I have offended you. Pray forgive me. I had no right to canvass your religious opinions, but you introduced the subject yourself."

"Yes, and I have nothing to be offended about," replied Jessie, more frankly. "You have shown me I ought to examine the question further, and I will think of what you have said: I will indeed."

"I am very glad to have such an assurance from you," replied Ernest, "because I am confident you will see reason to alter your convictions; and it is time every one should express their sentiments openly, when we see such a delusion making such way. The sect

seems to have been more than usually active in this neighbourhood. Have you been residing here long?"

"About a year. Before that, I was at school, and I should probably have gone back there, but my aunt, who brought me up, died soon after my return home."

"Then you don't like a country life?"

"Oh dear no! It is so dull—and I can't follow the farming, or it might help to pass the time away. I did for a while; but it tried my strength so, they made me give it up."—And, in truth, it required but a glance at her fragile-looking frame to see that she was quite unequal to the requisite exertions.—"I wanted to go out as governess, at one of the rich farmers," she added, "but my father wouldn't consent to it; so I keep the books of our own farm, but on such a small holding, that gives me very little to do."

"The farms here are all small," returned

Ernest. "I dare say you know there is some intention of enlarging them?"

"I've heard my father and Mr. Frost talking of it, and they seem to think it will be done soon, as the leases round here are all running out. It will be a great trouble to many, if the Squire breaks up the farms."

"He won't do anything harsh, I am sure," said Ernest, "particularly to the old families, who have been on the land so many years."

"If they have the preference, we shall have to go, for my father has only been here about twenty years, and that's nothing to some of the tenants. I've heard the large farmers on the other side of Glynnellan have been under the family more than a century; and they say it's to provide for their sons the Squire's going to break up the small holdings."

"I don't know how that is," replied

Ernest, "but it's quite true they are a sort of hereditary tenants, and some of them had ancestors out with the Glynnns at the Battle of Naseby. The tenantry held the Keep against the Parliament for a long time, though our old neighbours, the Wardours, did all they could to capture it."

"So I have heard, sir. But they say there was at least one Wardour who wished the defenders success."

"You mean poor Rachel? I've heard the same story. There are several version of it, but some day, when I go to Bydvil, I will try to learn the facts."

"I dare say you often go to Bydvil," said Jessie with a quick glance. And as if to show no unwarrantable curiosity, she added: "it's such a beautiful place."

"I've not been over it for many years—before Mr. Burge came there," replied Ernest, "and I'm not likely to go there

for some time. It's five miles from us, but only a short walk from you."

"And my favourite walk—the only one I can take without——"

She stopped suddenly, as her eye fell on the casement, and following her glance, Ernest discerned Frost, the bailiff, who had been watching them through the window, but seeing he was observed, now turned away.

"You don't like that man?" said Ernest, observing the startled expression of Jessie's face.

"I confess I do not," replied Jessie, hesitatingly, as if half afraid of giving offence.

"Nor I," said Ernest. "I've tried to get over the feeling, but I can't. And I often find him close upon me, just as we have done now, when I least expect him. He has followed me here, no doubt."

"He's always coming here," said Jessie,

biting her lip. "He has great influence over my father, and keeps him in a constant ferment about the proposed alterations in the farms, so that he seems to be in a sort of terror of him. But they are coming in."

As she spoke, the door opened, and the farmer and his new guest entered.

"Ah! taking it easy, Master Ernest?" he said with a sneer, which, however, did not mask a look of vexation. "I hope I don't spoil good company; but I've just called in, Jessie, to see how you are after your dip to-day."

"I'm very well," replied Jessie, coldly.

Her father here thought it was his duty to interpose, and invited Frost to take a glass of ale.

"Well, thank'ee, neighbour, I think I'll take a cup of Jessie's tea," replied Frost; "and then I'll get her to tell my fortune in the cup—for that's the fashion

in this country now. You should get her to tell yours, Master Ernest. She'd give you a rare good one, I know."

"Pray speak for yourself," said Ernest, stiffly, "and leave me to do the same."

"Lor! how you take fire at a bit of a joke," returned Frost. "It's the way with all the Glynns—they're like touch-wood, except Squire Worldly; and, for him, you'd think butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. But come, you won't be so sharp, Jessie, will you? Ah! Jessie's a clever girl, Master Ernest. If I was a young fellow like you, with all your advantages, I'd give her no peace till she'd fix the day. But I stand no chance against you. You wouldn't have me, would you, Jessie?"

"You know I wouldn't," was the reply, accompanied by a look equally decided, on which the farmer, who had been looking on, deeply absorbed, gave the faintest pos-

sible chuckle, indicating that he considered the whole scene an excellent joke. A whisper from Jessie interrupted his merriment.

“Mun let I drive’ee on to Glynnellan; young gen’leman,” he then said to Ernest who had risen to depart. “It’s a long pull on foot, and coming on a darksome night.”

“It’s only four miles across the moor,” replied Ernest, “and I care no more for the walk by night than by day.”

“Only you may meet with Mother Rebecca,” cried Frost; “and if you fall in love with any of her wenches, you’ll have Squire Worldly about you, for he vows he’ll take ’em all to himself. You tell ’em so, if you see ’em, Master Ernest,”

Ernest turned a deaf ear to the taunt, and bidding farewell to the farmer and Jessie, left the house without noticing the bailiff.

CHAPTER III.

NIGHTINGALES.

IT was growing dusk when Ernest passed out, but this was small discouragement to a sturdy young fellow, well acquainted with the country, and under no apprehension of being molested. He walked along for about half a mile at a leisurely pace, when he arrived at a disused way across the moor, and, as night had now come on, he paused to consider whether he should proceed by this route, which would save a considerable distance, or keep to the more frequented road.

Temerity prevailed over prudence ; and he was soon bending his steps across the moor.

The adventure of the afternoon had been so much out of the ordinary course, and his visit to the farmhouse so suggestive, that his mind, little accustomed to such experiences, was occupied more by what had passed than by the direction he was taking, and it was not till he had gone a considerable distance that, looking round, he found himself in a spot quite unknown to him. The most natural proceeding in such a dilemma was to retrace his steps, but this was more easily done in imagination than reality ; and for nearly two hours he wandered about, now on one track, now on another, as he happened to stumble into them, without ascertaining where he was. At length, he came to the unwelcome conclusion that, instead of nearing the road, he was going further

and further on to the moor, where it now seemed probable that he must spend the night, or, at least, wait till the moon, which would not rise till near morning, lent sufficient light to show some distinctive object, by which he might recognise the locality.

Just as he was thus giving up, his eye, in sweeping round, caught sight of a feeble gloaming like a reflection of light, and, though such an appearance was quite unaccountable, he determined to make for the spot. The approach was by a broken way, which he was traversing step by step, expecting every moment to be plunged into a hole, when, in passing a clump of trees, he was suddenly seized by both arms, and found himself confronted by two figures, wearing the dress of women, but manifestly of a sterner and a stronger mould.

“Who’s you?” demanded one, un-

masking a lantern, and turning it on Ernest's face.

"Blessed if 't airnt squire's nevvv!" observed the other. "Is there more an 'em comin'?"—And he peered round.

"Why, be't thou, Mairster Ernest?" said the first speaker. "You's goin' to take agen the poor, too!"

"I don't know what you mean," answered Ernest.

"What you come spyin' about here for, then, mairster?" rejoined the man. "'Tairnt loike thou, I suppose; but they's set 'ee an. Where's they stowed 'emselves?"

"This is a perfect riddle to me," answered Ernest. "I don't know who or what you're talking about, but if you think I've come here as a spy, you're very much mistaken. The fact is, I've lost my way, and seeing a light over here, I was making towards it, when you

stopped me. Now if you're reasonable beings, you'll direct me how to reach the road, and let me go : and, depend upon it, I shall never trouble you again."

" 'Hairnt come spyin', then ?" said his interrogator. " Well, I b'lieve 'ee. Go long till 'ee reach cross-track, and then—"

" He's won't go long till he see ma'am Becky, I'se wager," exclaimed his companion, interrupting him. " No, no, young mairster. You'n don't go that like. Come an wi' you !"

" I warn you," cried Ernest, " if you commit any violence——"

" Nobody shall mell to hurt 'ee," said the man who had first spoken ; " but mate's been agen your goin', you mun come afore cap'n. No 'casion to be afeard."

Fear, as meant by the speaker, was not a feeling likely to rise in Ernest's breast, but his situation did really cause him

anxiety, though he thought it prudent to accompany his detainers without further protest. As they advanced, he saw that the light rose from some cavity in the ground, which, on drawing nearer, proved to be an exhausted tin-mine, opening in a wide pit, whence successive ledges descended to a great depth. Here a link on the uppermost plateau threw a faint, uncertain glimmer over some thirty or forty figures, habited like the two outlookers, in old gowns and bonnets, with blackened faces, while, here and there, it showed a massive boulder, or a bluff of earth, leaving a gulf of darkness below. Even by this light, and under so grotesque a disguise, stooping shoulders and warped forms denoted that the majority of the assemblage was of the agricultural population; but, in truth, it was of a mixed character, comprehending not only small farmers and labourers, but several petty

tradesmen from the village, while three or four stalwart forms represented the iron-works and mines.

The party were just moving up from the pit, when Ernest and his captors, one on either side, were seen descending the incline by which it was entered, and there was a simultaneous halt, as the captain of the night, a burly, hybridous figure, stepped a pace or two forward, exclaiming, "Who's you?"

"Jonneck," answered one of the out-lookers, giving the watchword.

"Who's gat there, then?" demanded Rebecca.

"He'n squire's nevvv," said the less friendly marauder, "Found un sneaking an to pit, up to no good: so us broughten th' whoole gait."

This announcement elicited a general murmur, and the assemblage gathered round in a threatening manner, enclosing Ernest like a wall.

“Shairn’t mell o’ him,” cried his other captor. “Airnt a bad sart: only’s lose hissself on the biggin.”

“Oh! there’s no hairm in he,” observed one of the crowd: and two or three other voices expressed the same opinion.

“There’s hairm in every one an ’em,” said Rebecca, sternly. “They’n all of a piece, and the Glynns all’ays wor, time out o’ mind. Wolves h’ant like to bear lambs, I s’pose; nor more airnt Glynns. Now thou speak up, young man, and tell we where you’n left Squire Worldly and the specials; or you’s fare the worse.”

“I’ll tell you where I left him this morning,” answered Ernest,—“at the Keep, and I have seen nothing of him since. I am quite ignorant whether he is out to-night, but I know measures have been adopted to put down these assemblages, and, therefore, I recommend you all to go quietly home.”

“And who sat ’ee up to prate?” de-

manded Watkyns, the blacksmith, jostling against him with a threatening gesture, while several others burst into a derisive laugh. "You's busy a while agone down at Moor-End: now needs come mellin' here. Ay, look, if's like; I'se give 'ee a mairk to know I by.

"Shairnt tooch un," said Big Mike, a miner, planting himself by Ernest's side; and it was evident, from the exclamations around, that more than one would support the intervention.

"Bide still, all an ye," cried Rebecca; "or wunt like the upshot. Nobody's hairm the young man, but he's no call sneakin' roun' here. Us mun look to oursel's 'fore he."

"But if's lose hisself, 'tairnt his fault," answered Big Mike. "It's darksome enough to be loosed, I suppose, if's gat on the moor."

"Thanks for your good word, my

friend," said Ernest. "You do me no more than right, and I shan't regret this accident, if, by being brought here, I am instrumental in persuading you all to disperse, without attempting any unlawful act. I don't pretend to know what you've met here for, nor do I wish to know, but I'm sure it's for no purpose that will do you any good; and——"

"Stap! I'se tell 'ee what's for," cried a labourer at his side. "It's to smash an the two gates, down an Moor-End: that's do we good, I s'pose. Cairnt move an road without payin' pike: pay un an all us get to bite or sup: pay un an coal, an seed, an cairn, everything. Shairp wark an six shillin' a week."

"And I'se gat seven 'mouth to feed, 'sides my ain," observed another labourer. "You'n helped me yourself afore now, young mairster."

"If's you tell me whether Squire

Worldly's out, we'n let you gane," said Rebecca, perceiving that the last speaker had raised a decided feeling in Ernest's favour; "but we's swear you to keep dark about our meetin'."

"I've told you already I know nothing of Wordley Glynn's movements, except what you seem to know yourselves, that the large farmers have been sworn as constables," replied Ernest. "As to taking any oath, I tell you plainly nothing shall induce me to do so, and my silence as to what I have seen here to-night must depend upon circumstances."

"We'n cairn't let un go then," cried several voices. "He's go straight aff to squire, and fetch un down an us."

"Take un wi' us, then," said another voice: and the suggestion was received with applause and some laughter.

"Here's a smack for un," cried Rebecca, producing a smock frock, "but what's us do for a bonnet. Ay; that's a help," he

added, as a man handed him a dirty piece of crape. "You'n tie that roun' your hat, young mairster, and we's won't mind blackin' your phiz."

"I'll wear no disguise," cried Ernest. "If I go with you, it will be by force, and I have no occasion to conceal myself. I—"

But here two men, easily overpowering his resistance, forced the smock over his head, while another tied the crape round his hat, so as to fall like a veil over his face, and, now that he could no longer help himself, Ernest submitted to his fate.

"Cairnt peach an us now, young mairster," cried Rebecca. "Soh, lads, be ye all of a mind?"

"All!" was the unanimous response.

"Then snuff out the link," exclaimed Rebecca, "and hey for Moor-End gates."

"I'se an first," cried Big Mike, who knew the moor blindfolded. And turning on his lantern, he led the way up the incline.

CHAPTER IV.

THE FUGITIVE.

It was drawing towards midnight, as the Rebeccaites emerged from the pit, and was so dark that it required all Big Mike's tact, and all the light of his lantern, to make out the way. The party, therefore, proceeded but slowly, and for the most part in silence, as if, now the Rubicon was passed, many felt a painful consciousness of the peril of their situation. The fact was, that they were a most meek, patient, and enduring people, only goaded to resistance by desperation,

by poverty, neglect, local oppression, and wrong ; and Ernest, while indignant at the treatment he had received, and abhorring their lawless conduct, could not but feel a secret sympathy with their cause. Nor was he without a share in their apprehensions, if they really entertained any ; for as he had often been accused of vagrant habits, it would be difficult, were he found in such company, to prove that he was there against his own free will ; and he had no doubt that he should be charged with a guilty complicity in their proceedings. Such an offence, borne out by appearances, would be deemed unpardonable by his uncle, and the mere imputation would probably lead to his ruin.

As these reflections passed through his mind, he naturally watched for a favourable moment to escape, but found himself so closely guarded, that he was obliged,

after one or two baffled attempts, to relinquish the design. They were now nearing the road, and Ernest observed a horseman at the turnpike, but he rode off directly, as if he were only an ordinary passenger, leaving the toll-keeper, well known as a bold, determined man, standing at the gate, with the bar closed in his front.

“There be old Jones on the spy,” observed Rebecca. “He’s have a tussle for’t, I know.”

“I’se fetch un an ugly tap if’s untrac-tious,” cried the blacksmith, flourishing an axe.

“Thou bide quiet, will ’ee?” said Big Mike. “Bit too ready wi’ your tappin’, I s’pose.”

The blacksmith growled a reply, but it was lost in a yell from the others, as they made a rush at the gate.

“What’s you come here for?” cried the

toll-keeper, confronting them. "You'll best go aff, I tell 'ee, or I gie some an ye a slug in your skins."—And he levelled a blunderbuss.—"The first man as come an, steps in 's coffin."

"Now, nane o' your bounce, Jones," cried Rebecca, while the others, though brought to a stand, poured forth a torrent of threats. "Us don't want to mell o' thou, but we'll han down the gate. So jest get along, and leave we to our wark."

"I'll wark ye, if's come here," said the toll-keeper, "and next 'sizes I'se go ten mile to swear to some an ye, for all your black mugs. Han down the gate! best try it an."

"Here goes, then!" exclaimed a voice. And Big Mike, who had slipped unobserved round the toll-house, seized his arms behind. There was a sharp, clicking noise, followed by a report, as Jones,

in his struggle to free himself, pulled the trigger of his gun. But the charge passed harmlessly overhead, and the toll-keeper was powerless in the hands of the miner.

“Gie un a settler for that,” cried the blacksmith, rushing forward with his axe.

“Stop, man,” interposed Ernest, seizing his arm. “Would you commit murder?”

“Out o’ the way,” retorted the smith, fiercely, “or thou’ll get a clap thysel. Mun pash your finger in every puddle, mun ’ee?”

“What’s to do now?” cried Rebecca, pushing between them. “Soh you, if ’ee want to whet your hatchet, jest fix un in gate-post. Us airnt come here to smite old Jones. But *wheu!* who’s yan!”

“Here them be—them’s coom!” cried several voices together.

About a dozen horsemen, who had

been ambushed in an adjoining field, covered by a high, close hedge, now galloped on to the road, amidst the yells and groans of the rioters, who received them with a volley of stones, which, however, though striking several, did not arrest their advance. The effect of the charge was instantaneous. The Rebecaites, seized with a panic, made off in a body, hurrying Ernest along with them, and, indeed, having recognised his cousin in the opposite party, he was but too eager to go. The gate remaining closed, with the bolt shot, for a moment impeded the police; but this gave him little advantage, and, as he pushed across the moor, he perceived that he was especially singled out for pursuit. At first, one, then two of the horsemen, tracked his steps, neglecting the others to chase him, and his desire to escape was not diminished by an instinctive

conviction that one of the pursuers was his cousin. This suggested an apprehension that he had been recognised, which appeared the more likely, as the piece of crape, intended to conceal his features, had somehow got loose from his hat, leaving his face exposed, though he thought scarcely enough to admit of his being identified. He proceeded at a speed which few could match, yet not without stumbling, as he came on sudden mounds and falls in the ground, keeping ahead for a short time, but his pursuers gained upon him, and he was despairing of escape, when he reached a deep gully, and plunging down, was lost in the scrub which clothed its sides.

The horsemen drew up just above.

“I’m afraid he’s got off now, sir,” said the voice of Frost. “I saw him dive down here, and he’ll come out at t’other side, before we can ride round.”

“That’s a very natural conclusion, Mr. Frost,” replied another voice, in soft, silvery accents, “and evinces your usual tact; but the fact is, I remembered the gully, and thinking the fugitive might make for it, I ordered two of the patrol to take a sweep round, so as to get to the other side first. We will remain here a moment in case he attempts to return. It is our duty to do our utmost to capture this person, for I noticed he was one of the most active of the gang. You no doubt made the same observation?”

“How could I be off it, sir? He was the very worst of ’em.”

“And do you think you could identify him, Mr. Frost?” rejoined the other, in a caressing tone.

“I’d swear to him among a thousand. I know his cut. And so do you, too, sir, I’m sure.”—And Frost laid particular emphasis on these last words.

“My good Mr. Frost, you alarm me beyond measure. Hush, pray! If I could but feel sure it was that misguided young man, I should turn away directly, and seek to cover his escape. But the resemblance must be imaginary. Ernest Glynn could never so far forget what is due not only to his family, but to himself.”

“Ah! sir, you don’t know what Master Ernest ’ull do, I see—you couldn’t believe it, if I was to tell you. But there’s more mischief in him than you think; and I know he was down at the Blynt farm here this evening.”

“Indeed.”

“Yes. And isn’t he always goin’ among these labourers and such like? It’s my opinion you and the Squire have been rearin’ a viper, and you won’t find it out till he stings you. But there’s something moving in the scrub, for certain.”

Ernest, indeed, had scrambled to the bottom of the gully, where he crawled along on his hands and feet, screened from observation by the darkness, till he considered himself out of danger, when he crept cautiously up the side, and seeing no one, again took to the moor. But he had gone only a few yards, when he heard the tramp of horse, and saw he was still pursued, while retreat to the gully, where he had found such effectual shelter, was cut off. Escape seemed hopeless, but he dashed on, knowing he was close to the road, which, favoured by the ruggedness of the ground, he reached first, and as his pursuers were rapidly coming up, sprang over a gate into a farm-yard, thus raising a momentary barrier to their progress. He ran round the inclosure, but there was no other outlet, and, as his only chance, he made for the house, the back entrance to

which, facing another way, was not visible from the road. A glimmer of light through the keyhole encouraged him to raise the latch, and though the door was fast, a voice within, which he recognised as Jessie Clinton's, inquired who was there.

"Ernest Glynn," was the reply. "Pray open the door—quick!"

The bolt was withdrawn, and he darted in, securing the door again before he spoke.

"What is wrong?" asked Jessie, with a look of alarm, and glancing at his strange dress.

A word sufficed to explain.

"They've got into the yard." said Jessie, listening, and will see the light. But come in here. They're all in bed but me, so you won't be seen."—And she led the way into the parlour.

"It has just struck me that I may

involve you and your father in some trouble, if they trace me to the house," said Ernest, stopping: "so perhaps I had better go out to them; for they're sure to capture me."

"I hope not," said Jessie uneasily, "but at any rate, you must do what you can to get off. They can't have seen you come in. But—hark!"

There was a loud knocking at the door.

"Hilloa, neighbour Clinton!" cried a voice without—"neighbour, open the door!"

"It's Frost," whispered Jessie, her eyes flashing: "he'll keep on now, till he has my father up."

"And then they'll search the house," said Ernest. "I think I'll venture out by the front door, though even if I should get off, my cousin must reach home before me, and intercept me as I

go in.—No! I had better surrender at once.”

“Stay,” replied Jessie. “Escape by the front door, as you propose, is impossible; for they have no doubt set a watch there, but I can let you into the orchard, and if you go to Glynnellan across the fields, you may arrive home before your cousin.”

“That will do well.”

“Come, then. Ha! my father is talking to them from the window. He’ll be down directly.”

She led the way, with noiseless steps, to the dairy, where, after loosening the shutters, she blew out the light, so that nothing should be seen from the outside, and opening the casement, Ernest sprang out. He looked round, but the farmyard, where he supposed his pursuers to be, was separated from the orchard by a wall, and, as a tall fence cut off the road,

he could only see the space before him. All seemed clear, and he darted across.

Reaching the other side, he found himself hemmed in by a high hedge, which nowhere presented an opening, and he was considering how to make his way through this obstacle, when he was joined by Jessie.

“ I was afraid you would overlook the gap,” she said, “ and I’m sure you would never find your way in the dark across the fields : so I’ve come to guide you.”

“ That’s very kind of you,” replied Ernest, touched by her attention ; “ but to take you such a journey at midnight, and leave you to come back by yourself, would be too inconsiderate. Only tell me the direction, and I shall be able to manage.”

“ I must put you in the way first,” said Jessie.

She crept along by the hedge for a few

paces ; then, stooping down, drew aside a bundle of furze, disclosing a gap, through, which she glided, and was instantly followed by Ernest

“ We must slant across here to the poplars,” said Jessie, as he came out. “ There are half-a-dozen fields beyond, when you will come to Glynnellan Park. And look ! the moon is rising. You won’t have an unpleasant walk.”

“ I am now only concerned for you,” replied Ernest. “ And there is one thing you haven’t thought of: if they search the house, you will be missed.”

“ They may think I’m in bed. I’ve locked my room door, and they will hardly force it open. Besides, I shall be back soon.”

They walked on in silence for a few minutes, when they reached a gate opening into the next field.

“ Now you see where you are, Mr.

Glynn," said Jessie. "Those trees yonder are in Glynnellan Park, and your way is straight across.—Good-night."

And before Ernest could reply, she turned away, and glided back towards the orchard.

Ernest stood looking after her for a moment, with mingled sentiments of pity and interest—shocked by her religious perversion, surprised at her strange opinions, yet attracted, withal, by her appearance, her unaffected demeanour, and certain indications of natural good feeling, which showed an aptitude for better things. But the time was not opportune for pursuing such a theme, and his mind quickly turned to other considerations, more nearly concerning himself. He resumed his progress at a rapid pace, and in no cheerful mood, though the scene around, in its present fantastic aspect, had a tranquilizing effect, particularly congenial to his

imagination. The moon had now escaped from the mighty sepulchre of cloud, and glided majestically over the sky, resplendent with her light, while the rolling masses below, driven one over the other, gathered into mountains, whose silvered peaks seemed to sustain the heavens. Darkness mantled the horizon, but the beams of the queenly luminary fell like a halo over the mid-landscape, lighting and throwing up every object. Here a barn, there a hayrick or a clump of trees, isolated by their elevation, stood boldly out, flinging their long shadows on the ground in huge and grotesque proportions, suggestive of a thousand fancies. But it was the loneliness of the scene that constituted its greatest charm, imparting to all things a solemn and mystic tone, which awakened a corresponding feeling in the spectator.

Ernest soon reached the sunken wall of

the park, and clambering over, pushed through a thicket to the open sward, and thence to the house. At the further end of the mansion was a disused porch, and, as he wished to enter unperceived, he clambered up one of the columns to a window above, through which he gained a lobby, and made his way to his own room.

Hitherto his object had been concealment, but this, natural under the circumstances, was not in keeping with his character, which shrank from even the appearance of deception. Reflection pointed out a more honourable and more manly course. As he had done no wrong, he should seek no concealment; but boldly avow all that had occurred; and he therefore determined, whatever might be the result to himself, to seize the first opportunity of disclosing the whole transaction to his uncle, by which he might

indeed forfeit his protection, but would have no cause for self-reproach.

And now he could present himself before a juster and more merciful Judge, to whom the secrets of all hearts, disguise them as we may, are clear and distinct, and with whose name on his lips he closed his eyes, at peace with God and himself.

But a short time had elapsed when the door was softly opened, and two men entered with a light.

“He’s here, sir, sure enough,” observed one. “Yet I could swear it was him. How could he have got here before us?”

“We might imagine there were two Dromios,” replied the other, in a bland, affable voice. “And how tranquilly he sleeps!”

CHAPTER V.

A FAMILY GROUP.

It added to Ernest's unwillingness to confess his late adventure to Mr. Glynn, that the old man, from regarding him with a feeling little short of aversion, had recently treated him with more consideration, while he manifested a degree of coldness towards his cousin, which, though never extending beyond an irritable word, or impatient gesture, indicated, by its contrast with his previous bearing, that Wordley was no longer regarded with the same favour. But Ernest still remained in the

background, and no one but himself and Wordley, whose keen eyes nothing escaped, noticed the little change in his uncle's demeanour.

On the morning following the incidents just described, Mr. Glynn was seated before breakfast in the library, reading the newspaper of the previous day, just received by the London post, when Ernest entered.

The old man instantly raised his eyes from the paper, displaying a pale and sharply-cut face, to which, however, silver locks gave a striking and venerable look. His brow slightly cleared as he perceived Ernest, but the sight of a crutch at the side of his chair, showing that he was labouring under an attack of gout, did not increase his nephew's composure.

"I wish to speak to you for a few minutes, sir, if you are disengaged," said Ernest.

"Well," said Mr. Glynn: "what is it?"

“I presume you’ve heard of the affray with the Rebeccaites last night?” replied Ernest.

“I’ve heard so much about it, I don’t want to hear any more,” rejoined Mr. Glynn, with some impatience. “I haven’t seen Wordley yet,—he’s not famous for early rising; but the report is, that the ruffians were down at Moor-End gate, and your clever cousin let them go off scot-free.”

“I have an explanation to give regarding myself, sir, that—that—in fact, I hope you won’t think hardly of me, but I was involuntarily implicated in this business.”

“You!” exclaimed Mr. Glynn, laying down the newspaper with a look of astonishment. “What do you mean?”

“Nothing, I hope, to merit your displeasure, sir,” urged Ernest. “No blame can possibly attach to me, but I think it right to tell you the rioters compelled me to go with them.”

“This is a thing surpassing belief!” exclaimed Mr. Glynn, with a movement, which brought his gouty foot in contact with the crutch. “Don’t come near me,” he continued, as Ernest was hastening to his assistance. “You have the audacity to avow that you went with these men—yielded to their compulsion—allowed them to force you to commit a lawless act! Why, you’re a greater vagabond than I could ever have believed! I now see the character I have heard of you is your true one, and that your principles and tastes are on a par.”

“This is hard language, sir,” said Ernest, with emotion. “I beg leave to say—”

“*You* say! You’ve said quite enough for the present, I think. I’ve a great mind to turn you out of my house this instant.”

“You need not turn me out, Sir,” said Ernest, losing his self-command. “If it is your wish I am quite willing to go.”

“And where will you go to, pray?—to the parish! Unfortunately, you are not so easily got rid of.”

“You shall have no reason to repeat such an assertion!” said Ernest. “I have long felt the yoke of dependence heavy: I now find it insupportable.”—And he moved to the door.

“You’re a pretty fellow, certainly—a pretty dependent—a grateful, dutiful, affectionate relation!” cried Mr. Glynn. “You’re going to set up on your own account, are you? This is what you’ve been aiming at, with your books, and your scribbling! And pray do you know who has made you what you are?—who has given you your education, sheltered, and supported you?”

“Yes—my dear uncle;” said Ernest, all his resentment vanishing as he spoke. “I owe everything to your kindness, and feeling this, I am always anxious for your

approbation. But I am sure you will acquit me of blame when you hear how little I had to do with these men.”—And he related the occurrence as it had happened.—“You may ask me,” he continued, “why I didn’t claim the protection of Wordley, instead of running away, when he came up with the patrol. My reason was, that I was afraid he might place my conduct in an unworthy light; but as soon as I reached home, I determined to tell you myself all that occurred, and now you can decide if I have done anything wrong.”

The old man’s keen grey eyes ran over the speaker’s face with a quick sharp glance, as if he hardly understood this candour; but before he could reply, the door opened, admitting Wordley Glynn.

The new-comer was a tall, gentlemanly man, so much Ernest’s senior, that while the one was but just verging on manhood,

the other might be set down as having reached middle age. His appearance, at first sight, was extremely prepossessing, but occasionally one caught a furtive look of his dark, penetrating eyes, which was calculated to weaken the impression, though the unswerving suavity of his manners, indicating such perfect singleness of purpose, often disarmed mistrust, and set the most wary at rest. In polish and refinement, indeed, Wordley Glynn was a Chesterfield, while in temper he grafted the patience of Griselda on the immobility of Diogenes. Hence, while no one could say he had ever done any good, few men were so popular, and he was considered to be the very cream of human kindness, merely from the kindly flavour of his words. Nevertheless, he did not wholly escape the shafts of detraction, and it must be confessed there was one mystery about him which afforded them a fair target. This,

strange to say, was a deficiency of coin, notwithstanding a handsome settlement from his uncle, in addition to the property he inherited from his father—a deficiency known, indeed, only to a few, and none the less perplexing from being relieved by startling flushes of prosperity, which still left his temporary embarrassment unaccounted for, as, from his residing at the Keep, he was not burdened with the cost of an establishment. But wags rush in where sages fear to tread: and, during his stay at the University, some of the perverse freshmen, wiser in their generation than any Fellows, attributed his financial fluctuations to high play, while, as a further reflection on his pretensions, they transformed his name of Wordley into **WORLDLY** — a designation which had followed him into Wales, and by which he was often spoken of among the country-people, who were quite unconscious that it was intended as a reproach.

“Good morning, dear uncle,” cried Wordley, with a look of deep affection, as he advanced hastily towards Mr. Glynn, darting, at the same time, one of his furtive looks at Ernest. “I trust you are better to-day.”

“No, I’m worse—a good deal worse,” growled Mr. Glynn, though his eye dropped before the beaming tenderness of the inquirer. “And what makes me so, is the manner in which everything is done to worry and torment me. A nice business you made of it last night, after all your grand intentions.”

“I assure you, I spared no effort to carry out your wishes,” replied Wordley; “and though unsuccessful, in so far as I failed to secure any of the ringleaders of the conspiracy, I fear—I say *fear*—one of them was identified.”—Here he half turned to Ernest.—“From him we may learn something of its organization.”

“You are far too mysterious for me,”

said Mr. Glynn. "But if you identified any one, you have, of course, issued a warrant for his apprehension."

"No, I have not, and you must pardon me, dear uncle, if I don't enter into any further explanation at present. I can see you are suffering acutely this morning, and I should spare you as long as possible the sad communication I have to make."—And, still feigning reserve, he spoke a few low words to Ernest, eliciting an indignant look.

"What is this?" said Mr. Glynn to Ernest, with a frown. "You confessed your folly, then, because you were discovered! This is the moral of your fine story!"

"Has Ernest told you he was one of the rioters, Sir?" asked Wordley, innocently.

"No!" exclaimed Ernest. "But I have stated the fact—that I was present. More I defy you to prove, or even that, except from my own lips."

“You are losing your temper, Ernest,” said his cousin—“as if I could have any object in view in this matter but your good—to rescue you from such vicious and infamous associates. I hope, sir—”

“Stop!” said Mr. Glynn, who had been scanning them both with a piercing glance. “That he was present he admits. The only question is, did he take part in the proceedings? You say you recognized him—though he was disguised, and it was so dark that some of the patrol lost their way. To place his identity beyond doubt, why didn’t you follow him?”

“I am glad I adopted the very plan you suggested,” answered Wordley. “I traced him as far as Blynt farm, but there he succeeded in concealing himself.”

“Do you mean he got into the house?”

“I had every reason to think so.”

“Then, why didn’t you search it?”

“I did, with the exception of one

room, which, being occupied by the man's daughter, who was supposed to be asleep, I was prevailed upon by her father not to enter."

"That is the very room you should have examined—if you thought he was in the house," exclaimed Mr. Glynn, with sudden vehemence. "But I suppose you came quietly home, and found he was still absent."

"I wish to represent everything that can tell in Ernest's favour," answered the candid Wordley, "and therefore I must state that when I reached the Keep, I found him in bed. He appeared to be asleep when I looked into his room—if that is of any consequence."

"It's of the highest consequence," replied Mr. Glynn; "for it proves he couldn't ^{have} been concealed at the farm. I'm glad of it, and glad you have done him such justice."

“I’m sure you can’t suppose I have any other feeling towards him, sir,” returned Wordley. “Indeed, I could hardly have supposed he was at the farm at all if I had not heard from Frost that he had been there in the early part of the night, and I understand—” here his lip curled a little—“drank tea there.”

The cloud returned to Mr. Glynn’s brow at these words. “Is this true?” he asked of Ernest.

“Quite true, sir,” was the reply; “and since Wordley has mentioned the circumstance, I will state what led to it.”—And he briefly narrated his proceedings at the Mormon meeting.

“You saved the girl, then!” said Mr. Glynn. “Humph! Well, we must get rid of all these Mormons, if we can, and the Rebecca rascals, too. But what you have done is creditable to you, Ernest, and not the less so that you have given a

modest account of it. Still, I would rather you didn't go so much among the lower classes, as I hear you do. Quixotism never does any good, and is liable to be misrepresented. But I believe your intentions are good—yes, I believe they are.”

“ I hope you may always think so, and feel so, sir,” said Ernest.

But, to judge from appearances, the person most gratified at the turn which affairs had taken, was Wordley, whose countenance, always benignant, now quite beamed with pleasure and good feeling.

“ Let me congratulate you, Ernest, on the triumphant manner in which you have cleared yourself in this transaction,” he said, laying his hand affectionately on Ernest's shoulder. “ It is a source of infinite satisfaction to me, I assure you.”

“ He owes you small thanks for it,

then, whatever may be due to his own manliness and candour," remarked Mr. Glynn. "But we've done with it now! Help me in to breakfast, boy."

"Permit me, dear uncle," said Wordley, in his softest tones.

"Wait till I ask you," answered the old man, tartly.

And taking Ernest's arm, he hobbled out of the room.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TABLES TURNED.

ERNEST had hitherto been allowed to spend his time as he pleased, without hindrance or inquiry. At first, this freedom had been very agreeable, but it soon became irksome, and he began, as he grew older, to feel the want of direct employment. His active mind was weary of idleness; and occupation, so long desired as an amusement, at length became a necessity. Cut off from ordinary pursuits, he had no resource but study, which, indeed, his seclusion from society

rendered particularly suitable; and assiduous attention to drawing, algebra, and the beautiful problems of Euclid, so effective in developing and enlarging the intellect, was rewarded with no mean success. Nor was he insensible to the allurements of science, in time making himself master of its leading principles, and acquiring, above all, a practical knowledge of botany, which rendered his rambles about the country as instructive as they were interesting. Mr. Glynn's library was not large, but it contained an average assortment of books, including, of course, the works of our standard authors, and a few notable productions of the day: it was with the former Ernest preferred to linger, and the magic verse of Shakespeare, and those master-pieces of refinement and composition, Addison's elegant essays, gave tone and elevation to his ideas, while, in graver moments, he fos-

tered his literary tastes at the feet of Blair. Fiction, as well as poetry, presented irresistible charms to his imagination; and he learnt to dwell on the tender pathos of the Vicar of Wakefield, to smile at the sarcasm and irony of Le Sage, and to laugh at the quaint drollery of Swift and Cervantes.

With such pursuits and associations, and isolated from all other companionship, it was natural that his mind should take a contemplative turn, and become more mature than usual at his years. In his solitude, he found pleasure in committing his impressions to paper, and not unfrequently his ardent and aspiring genius clothed these reflections in a poetic garb, and sought a poet's inspiration. Perhaps, he failed, but his labour, after all, was not thrown away, and practice accustomed him to new combinations of words, greater felicity of expression, more subtle and

nobler thoughts, and a freedom and fluency of diction, destined, at a future time, to lend him signal aid in his way through life.

But this round of occupations, in some respects very congenial, by no means reconciled him to his situation of dependence, which was naturally repugnant both to his feelings and his aspirations. In his frequent musings on the future, he cherished a youth's ambition of distinction, and longed to go forth, in his own strength, to encounter the struggles and difficulties of life, and make them the stepping-stone to fortune: besides which, the uncertainty of his prospects being well understood, he was exposed to familiarities from the servants, and other annoyances, which made his position at the Keep very galling to a quick and sensitive spirit. But Mr. Glynn would listen to no proposal for setting him forward in life, and

a sense of duty restrained him from taking any steps with that view himself, while they were denied the sanction of his protector.

All these things considered, it will excite little surprise that the servants attending in the breakfast-room, on the morning indicated in our last chapter, were struck with amazement when Mr. Glynn entered leaning on Ernest's arm, and followed by the lately all-potent Wordley, who, however, dexterously concealed, under a cheerful and smiling aspect, the vexation rankling within. Poor Ernest nearly ruined himself at the outset, by treading on his uncle's gouty toe, but, after a slight reproof for his clumsiness, the invalid allowed him to arrange his chair, while Wordley, who had hastened to take advantage of the accident, was coldly repulsed.

There was a silence of some minutes,

and it seemed to the servants, as they vanished from the room, that things were on the brink of a revolution, the consequences of which it was impossible to foresee. Ernest himself sat quite bewildered; the old man was moody and taciturn; and only the polished Wordley, preserving the same serene demeanour, appeared perfectly at his ease.

The meal was finished at last; and Ernest was greatly relieved at the prospect of liberation.

“ You’ve eaten no breakfast,” said Mr. Glynn, as he rose from table.

“ Thank you, I am not hungry, uncle,” replied Ernest.

“ Late hours last night,” remarked Wordley, in a tone of kindly caution. “ You must really be more regular, Ernest, or you’ll injure your health.”—And he looked appealingly to Mr. Glynn.

“ You’ve been moping too much over

your books, boy," said Mr. Glynn, without heeding the appeal. "You'd better put them aside for to-day, and take a ride out. I want to send over to Bydvil to Mr. Burge, and you may as well jump on the bay mare and go. Tell Hurley," he added, turning to the butler, "to saddle the bay mare for Mr. Ernest, and in future she's to be kept entirely for his use."

At this unheard-of announcement, the butler glanced inquiringly at Wordley, as if to obtain his sanction of the order, but Wordley's eyes, half-anticipating the reference, were so intent on the newspaper, that he was insensible to anything else.

"Dear me!" he exclaimed. "Another murderous outrage of the Rebeccaites!"

"Hang the Rebeccaites!" said Mr. Glynn.

The butler was now so startled, that,

in passing out of the door, he ran against the footman, scalding his foot with the contents of the coffee-pot. Both instantly disappeared.

“ You may set off at once, Ernest,” said Mr. Glynn, “ or, perhaps, I’d better write a note to Mr. Burge, and ask him to come over here, as I want to see him particularly.”

“ Excuse my interfering, dear uncle,” said Wordley ; “ but if you are sending to Mr. Burge about the ore discovery, I venture to suggest, as Ernest is unused to such things, that you should intrust your commission to me. I have always hitherto enjoyed your confidence, and you have never found it misplaced.”

“ You think so ?” said Mr. Glynn, frowning.

“ I hope *you* think so, sir.”

“ I will tell you what I think,” returned Mr. Glynn.—“ That you have been play-

ing the tyrant over this lad—misrepresenting, perhaps maligning him to me, and making me regard him in a false light. Something tells me I've not long to live, and I wish you to understand that I consider him as near to me as yourself, and he shall be treated in every way the same."

"I can have no other wish, dear uncle. But you must pardon me for observing, while Ernest is present, that you do not act with your usual justice in saying I have misrepresented him to you. I am deeply hurt and wounded by such a charge, and should have thought my disposition was too well known, and too well appreciated, for anything of the kind to be imputed to me. I call upon Ernest to say when I have so far forgotten what was due as much to myself as to him."

"I have made no complaint against you, Wordley," said Ernest, "and I wish for

no recriminations. I am satisfied not to be condemned for the future without being heard in my defence."

"A very proper feeling," said Mr. Glynn, approvingly.

"I am sorry I can't compliment you on your candour, Ernest," replied Wordley, in a reproachful tone; "for you seem as if you wished to confirm our dear uncle in the impression he has conceived against me. I must beg you to discard insinuations, and speak out boldly, that I may know what I have done, and be able to defend myself; for my uncle's affection is too precious a thing for me to give up. You ask not to be condemned unheard yourself; let the same measure of justice be conceded to me."

"It will be time enough to make such a request when I accuse you of anything," returned Ernest. "I am now too well pleased with the position assigned

me to make any reference to what is past."

"You hear!" cried Mr. Glynn to Wordley: "why do you keep on?"

"What I have said, sir, has always been for Ernest's good," replied Wordley—"though I may have sometimes seemed severe, and may even have been too zealous. Unfortunately our best intentions often appear to disadvantage. But I think I understand Ernest now; and am confident he will one day understand me: meanwhile, let us live in affectionate reliance on each other."

He extended his hand to Ernest, who, touched and conciliated, forgot his animosity, and eagerly accepted the overture, while Mr. Glynn looked on without making a remark.

CHAPTER VII.

THE MAN OF CAPITAL.

MR. BURGE, the gentleman whom Ernest was about to visit, was the owner of Bydvil House, a mansion of some pretensions, about five miles from Glynnellan. Though possessing a considerable estate, he had no claim to be reckoned among the hereditary gentry of the principality, being, in fact, an emigrant from London, where he had acquired his wealth in the lottery of trade. Yet from his grand airs, his predilection for such erudite matters as heraldry and gene-

alogy, and the contemptuous tone in which he spoke of the industrial and humbler classes, one could never have dreamt that his father had been a baker, and that he had himself been engaged in the hardware line. To say truth, the real facts were known only to a few; for one of those irresponsible potentates called Kings-at-Arms, who can do what can be done by no other Kings—give a man a grandfather, had distinctly traced his descent from a Norman baron, hight De Bourg, who came over to England with the Conqueror, and whose great-grandson, Reginald de Bourg, in the reign of Edward the First, changed the family designation to De Burgh, whence it was afterwards corrupted to Burge. It was most amusing to see how implicitly Mr. Burge, the retired iron-master, believed in this fiction—how he swore by it, and what a passion it begat

in him for all works of a genealogical character, especially the unrivalled productions of Sir Bernard Burke, which he justly regarded as the best authorities. But his veneration for birth, though seemingly carried to Castilian excess, was entirely contingent on its association with wealth; for he considered rank without riches a mere imposture. It was not the coronet, but the gilt upon it—not the ancient name, but the long rent-roll, that won his respect and commanded his homage. Gold was not only his idol; it was his mistress. Money had done so much for him—had given him such a status and position in the land, and invested him with so many specious pretensions, that he looked upon it as a living influence, and cherished for the sordid metal some of the grateful feeling due to the Giver of it. To him people were good or bad, respectable or des-

picable, according to their means ; and, carrying out this principle, he shut his eyes to the turpitude and selfishness of the rich, while he saw all the sores in the naked souls of the poor.

Yet with so much devotion to the Golden Calf, there was one other thing for which Mr. Burge felt involuntary reverence ; and that was talent. In the height of his success, he was sensible of an innate deficiency, which he imagined must be equally apparent to other eyes, and which, therefore, continually haunted and embarrassed him. In society, though he could really converse passably enough, he scarcely ventured to open his lips, from fear of making an awkward mistake ; and at home, he dreaded the criticism of his own servants. Miss Felicia Cramboy, his daughter's governess, had dexterously contrived to overcome this diffidence, as far as regarded herself, and to her Mr.

Burge was more communicative, and more unconstrained, than to any one else, at the same time looking up to her as a sure guide in the hour of difficulty, though she appeared to him as dust beneath his feet in point of station.

In the estimation of the world Mr. Burge was a religious man. Regularly every Sunday he was seen at Church in his high pew, from which he could look down on the congregation—he loved the chief place in the synagogue; and no one could behave in Church with greater decorum: the only thing he omitted was prayer. He was also a frequent attendant at the Communion, which he “received,” as the phrase goes, in the most edifying manner, without a thought of the poacher he had committed to prison the day before, and whose wife and children were then perishing of want. As for his deeds of benevolence, are they not recorded in

the public subscriptions of the county? and how many of the charitable institutions of the metropolis, as their advertisements in the daily journals attest, reckon him among their supporters? This was a munificence of necessity, due to his social rank and position; but in public life, where the great maxim is to make the most show at the smallest expense, he was scrupulously economical. As chairman of the board of guardians, he reduced the parochial expenditure of the poor to the lowest possible ebb, and the dietary of the Bydvil workhouse, by which body and soul were so ingeniously kept together, was held up by the Poor Law Inspector to the envy and admiration of surrounding unions as a perfectly scientific achievement—a soothing reflection for Mr. Burge, when, in another world, he sues for a drop of water to cool his parched tongue!

Mr. Burge was at lunch with his daughter Emily,—a young lady still under tutelage, with a pretty, budding face, and more than an ordinary share of bashfulness, when he was informed of Ernest's arrival. As a dependent on his uncle, with no great expectations, the visitor was not one of his favourites, and his distaste for him was increased by the cold, haughty manner which Ernest always opposed to the arrogance of the rich, but which was considered by the parvenu to be directed exclusively against himself—and, further, by his alleged vagrant habits, which he regarded as indicative of radicalism. The ironmaster, however, was most desirous of cultivating the good graces of Mr. Glynn, who, after allowing him to reside some time in the neighbourhood without acknowledging his existence, had, in consequence of his supporting the same interest in the county,

lately condescended to admit him to his acquaintance; and hence he thought he could not do less than invite the Squire's nephew to lunch. But, to mark his superiority, he put on his grandest air as his visitor entered, extending him his forefinger, which Ernest, rather despising maimed civilities, affected not to see, merely bending to the great man, but making a more gracious inclination to Emily, whom he had met once or twice before on similar terms.

"I thought you must be hungry after your ride, sir," said the host, rather taken aback: "so had you brought in here, hoping you would join us."

"Thank you," replied Ernest: "I must ask you to excuse me, as I breakfasted very late this morning. I have come over with this note from my uncle."

"Very happy to receive it, sir," said Mr. Burge—he was lavish with the ap-

pellation of "sir."—"Your uncle's a very good man, and holds a high position in the county, sir—justly so, for he's worth his hundred thousand, I should say—full!"—And he broke open the note.

Ernest turned to Emily, and by way of opening a conversation, made some common-place remark on the state of the weather, to which the young lady made an inaudible reply.

"So much rain must have kept you a prisoner for some time," pursued Ernest, enlarging on the fruitful topic.

Emily confessed that it had, and Ernest was pondering how to open another parallel, when Mr. Burge, who regarded his advances with anything but complacency, interposed.

"Mr. Glynn tells me, sir, he has mentioned to you what he wants to see me about," he said.

"Yes," replied Ernest. "Some pieces

of ore have been picked up at Glynnellan, and he wishes to show them to you, and ask your advice about working the ground."

"Very good," said Mr. Burge, encouraged by this reference to resume an imposing attitude. "Mr. Glynn is a man of great judgment, sir!—what is his own opinion?"

"I think he's rather daunted by the result of Mr. Lewis's operations at Carthyr."

"Mr. Lewis!—Mr. Lewis is nobody, sir: he's no test. Mr. Lewis isn't worth his five thousand, sir; and to work out a scheme of that kind requires a thorough good man—a man who can afford to sink his ten thousand, and look for no immediate return."

"Then, you think my uncle may be warranted in opening the ground."

"That depends, sir! Capital may do

much: we owe all we possess to capital. Our manufactures, our commerce, our railroads, the mighty power of steam—" and Mr. Burge waved his hand theatrically—"all, sir, are owing to capital. Capital is a beautiful thing: it gives us great feelings, sir, and a man's nothing without feelings."

"Capital certainly gives the power of doing much good," said Ernest, rather won by his last words; "and it's a satisfaction to reflect that a great many people will find employment at Glynnellan, if this undertaking is carried out. That is one reason why I wish for it."

"Well, sir, we shall see," said Mr. Burge. "I shall be very glad, and very proud, to afford such a respectable gentleman as your uncle is, sir—the richest man in the county, I should say—the advantage of my experience; but before I can give an opinion, I must examine

both the ore and the ground. If you are going straight back, I will ride over to Glynnellan with you."

Ernest expressed his satisfaction at the proposal, and readiness to return at once, but at this moment a servant informed Mr. Burge that his bailiff was waiting to see him; and the great man, with an exclamation of impatience, went off to another room, reluctantly leaving Emily and Ernest to themselves.

There was a moment's pause, when Emily stole a glance at the door, as if half inclined to follow her father, but, at length, desperately took refuge in a book.

"Are you studying German?" said Ernest, who had caught sight of the title.

"Yes," faltered Emily."

"Can you get a master down here?"

"No: I learn from Miss Crambo, my governess."

"Ah! she is a very accomplished person, is she not?"

“Very—and learned too.”

“A regular blue-stockings?”

“I musn’t say that,” replied Emily, smiling, and almost forgetting her shyness; “for she is anxious to make every one as learned as herself, which I believe blue-stockings are not. She has just started a school in the village, for the poor people’s children; and goes herself to teach them. In fact, she is there now, or you would have seen her.”

“And is she the only teacher?” asked Ernest.

“Well,” answered Emily, all her blushes returning, “I may say she is, though I try to help as much as I can. She goes to the school one day, and I the next, and papa has lately engaged a young woman to be constantly there, though he was very averse to it at first.”

“I can’t conceive on what ground he could possibly object to it,” remarked Ernest.

“He thought education might make the poor discontented.”

“I am sorry to differ from him, but that opinion has always appeared to me a very great fallacy. Besides, the poor about here can hardly be more discontented than they are, while the ignorance around us is something frightful, as I dare say you have found.”

“Frightful indeed ! you will hardly believe many of the villagers had never heard of God.”

“I know it only too well,” answered Ernest, “and glad I am to find the light is breaking in upon them. Miss Cramboy is more to be honoured for this good work than for all her learning. You say nothing of your own efforts, but no doubt they are very serviceable. I hope you are making way.”

“If it depended on me, we should do very little,” said Emily ; “but Miss

Cramboy is so persevering. And we get on better since papa has given us a schoolmistress, as many of the children, who can only speak Welsh, are now made to understand us. Poor things! they seem very anxious to learn."

"As I am sure you are to teach, though you must find the task rather an arduous one sometimes."

"It requires patience."

"If that is the chief qualification, you must be eminently successful."

"I don't know that," said Emily, with her sweet smile, while there was more of pleasure than embarrassment in the colour that suffused her cheek; "but I confine myself to the humblest steps of learning, at present seldom rising above the alphabet; and this is not so trying as the higher branches, which are taught exclusively by Miss Cramboy. We have divided the scholars into two classes, one

under her control, and one under mine, and we each bring on our pupils in our own way ; for Miss Cramboy has peculiar notions on the subject of education, and she is now carrying them out."

"And you adhere to the old-fashioned way of beginning at the beginning. Well, I prefer your plan, and am sure it will answer best. I half suspect Miss Cramboy is the theoretical teacher, and you the practical."

"Oh, Miss Cramboy knows best—by far ; only I feel I can do so little, I don't aim at much. If I can teach my scholars to spell, read, and sing the choral service, I shall be satisfied."

"You teach them singing, then?" said Ernest. "As I can't hear the performance of the scholars, may I have the pleasure of hearing the mistress?"—And he glanced at the pianoforte.

Emily was now caught in a trap, from

which she would have done anything to free herself, but as escape seemed hopeless, she suffered Ernest to lead her to the instrument, and had just taken her seat, when they were interrupted by the return of Mr. Burge.

CHAPTER VIII.

RACHEL'S SORROW.

EMILY, on perceiving her father, and observing that he looked far from pleased to see her and their visitor on such friendly terms, was ready to sink from her seat ; but, whatever might be his secret feelings, Mr. Burge made no remark, soothing himself with the reflection that Ernest would have few opportunities of improving these relations, as he should take care to keep him at a safe distance for the future.

He now hurried him away, scarcely allowing him to say adieu to Emily, who, on her part, was afraid to look up. They

found their horses at the door, and mounting, rode off in no sociable mood, and but a few casual words passed between them all the way to Glynnellan. They parted at the hall-door, and the iron-master was conducted to Mr. Glynn, while Ernest, not sorry to be rid of him, sauntered to and fro on the terrace.

Nothing showed more strongly his improved position in the family than the altered demeanour of the servants. The miserable sycophants who had passed him unnoticed the day before, scarcely deeming him equal to themselves, now went out of their way to testify respect, and he already tasted the sweets of fortune. But the hard training he had undergone, through so many years of humiliation, taught him to appraise such things at their right value, and his disposition was not likely to be spoiled by his unexpected elevation.

As he was ruminating on these inci-

dents, he heard his uncle's voice, and presently the Squire appeared, accompanying Mr. Burge to the door. An adept at feeling the pulse of the times, so as to discern a change almost by instinct, Mr. Burge, from being scarcely civil before, now regarded Ernest with the utmost benignity.

"What do you say to a ride back to Bydvil, my young friend?" he said, laying his hand on Ernest's arm. "Can you spare him to-day, sir?" he added to Mr. Glynn. "We've really seen too little of him, and our pleasant journey here this morning has made me reproach myself that we arn't better acquainted."

"He can go, by all means," answered Mr. Glynn.

"You will be alone all day, sir," suggested Ernest, to whom further companionship with Mr. Burge was not very inviting.

“ Well thought of, young man,” remarked Mr. Burge. “ I like to hear your nephew, sir, speak in this manner. It shows his affection for you: it shows he has good feelings; and I’m glad to see a young man with good feelings.”— Mr. Burge, who so recently had offered Ernest his forefinger, now seized his hand, and gave it a cordial shake, exclaiming— “ Your uncle may be proud of you, sir, for you’re a credit to him.”

Such advances quite conciliated Ernest, who began to reciprocate the kindly sentiments Mr. Burge expressed. His horse was soon brought round, and they rode off together, the ironmaster, as they proceeded, turning the conversation on the subject of his uncle, and the affectionate manner in which he had spoken of him that morning, which, if the truth must be told, had led him to regard Ernest as a very promising fellow, likely to be worth money

some day, whatever people might think. Thus they arrived at Bydvil in the best humour with themselves and with each other.

Mr. Burge, unmindful of his late resolution, at once sought out Emily, who was amazed at the reappearance of Ernest, and still more, to see her father, who she thought had been so abrupt before, treat him with such marked attention. Instead of discouraging their intercourse, indeed, he now seemed disposed to promote it, and soon left them to themselves, desiring Emily to take their guest over the grounds, and show him all that was to be seen.

The young girl quite forgot her timidity in the novelty of her situation. There was, in truth, something so reassuring in Ernest's manner and conversation, in his frank, expressive countenance, and the obvious kindness and suavity of his nature, that it had an immediate effect, and cer-

tainly could not be overlooked by one of the gentle sex. Hence they were speedily on the best terms, and as they walked through the domain, there was nothing in their demeanour to indicate that they were not old familiar friends.

“This is the first time I have been over Bydvil,” remarked Ernest, “and I had no idea it was such a charming spot. Mr. Burge has certainly improved it very much ; for his predecessors, the Wardours, who latterly never resided here, had allowed it to fall into a sad state of neglect.”

“Nothing could be worse,” replied Emily. “I remember, when we first came, the whole place was a wilderness. The fate of its ancient owners was reflected at every turn.”

“A melancholy fate—for such an ancient family to come to an end, and have its name blotted out ! I always think of it with regret ; for, you know, the War-

dours and Glynnns were neighbours for centuries. And now they are completely swept away—not a vestige left, even on their own inheritance.”

“ Oh ! we have a vestige of them—the hermitage, for instance, where we are now going, and a very interesting memorial it is. There is a legend connected with it, too—but of course, as a Glynn, you know the story of Rachel Wardour.”

“ I’ve heard several versions of it, and have long promised myself to learn the right one. You are just the person to be able to tell it.”

“ I can only give you the one current here, without vouching for its accuracy ; and, indeed, poor Rachel’s real history can never be clearly ascertained. Her father, Sir Humphrey, as you no doubt know, was one of the Puritan leaders, in the time of the Commonwealth ; and he shut her up in the hermitage to keep her from her lover, a young cavalier, bearing the to him

hateful name of Glynn. But the cavalier determined, by fair means or foul, to carry Rachel off, and it is said that she was not unwilling. Be that as it may, it is supposed she got out one night on the terrace-wall, with the intention of making her escape, but in the dark fell over, and her body was found in the lake next morning, without anything to explain the mystery. The terrace is now gone, and only a part of the wall remains; but three or four clumps of wall-flowers on the top, which come out every spring, are still called Rachel's Sorrow, and are said to mark her steps along the wall."

"This is by far the best account I have heard," said Ernest, "and makes a perfect little romance, though it doubtless owes much to the narrator. But here is the hermitage itself."

"And what do you think of it? Is it not very picturesque?"

"Very indeed."

The ruin, which was really a striking object, abutted on a sheet of water, with banks of emerald turf sloping back to umbrageous trees, clothed in the first foliage of Spring. Around was a pretty, though not extensive view ; and the hermitage was so placed as to command the whole. Crossing a public footway, which wound round the side of the lake, the two friends stopped before the broken wall.

“There are the flowers, you see—Rachel’s Sorrow,” said Emily, “what a pity they’re out of reach !”

“They’re not out of reach, if you’d like to have some,” replied Ernest.

“Oh ! I wouldn’t have you climb up for worlds,” said Emily, playfully, yet with a touch of alarm. “You’d be falling into the water, like poor Rachel, and then we should have another sad legend to tell.”

“But not half such a romantic one,” answered Ernest, “as I should swim ashore, and escape with a wet jacket.”

And before Emily could interpose, he clambered up the end of the ruin, and gained the top of the wall.

“Pray don’t go on!” cried Emily in a half scream. “You’ll fall over: I’m sure you will.”

But the audacious Ernest still crawled along the wall, and had just reached the first blossoms, when in drawing back, his hand slipped, and the flowers dropped into the water.

“What is the matter?” cried Emily, as he uttered an exclamation.

“I’ve had my usual ill-luck, and let them all go!” replied Ernest.

“What a pity! But never mind: I’ll get some another day.”

“I’d rather fall in myself than you should be disappointed,” said Ernest.

And clinging to the ivy which masked the face of the ruin, he lowered himself to the water's edge, stretching over as far as he could to reach the flowers. Emily, who had previously trembled for his safety, now became terrified.

"He'll be drowned!" she exclaimed, clasping her hands. "What shall I do? what *can* I do?"

"Why did you let him climb up?" said a girl, who had approached unobserved along the public footway. "You're so spoiled by fortune, you can't even see a few weeds rankling on a wall without craving for them."

The upbraiding tone and angry glance of the speaker, combined with her unexpected appearance, so startled Emily, that for an instant she could make no reply.

"It was wrong, but I didn't wish him to get them," she said, at length, almost mechanically. "How could I keep him back?"

“How?” answered Jessie Clinton.
“You pretend not to know! But there, he’s safe! *You’ll have Rachel’s Sorrow, after all.*”

She gave a short, derisive laugh, and disappeared round the angle of the ruin, as Ernest, having recovered the flowers, began to scramble back along the wall.

“I’m so glad you’re safe,” said Emily, as he alighted on the ground. And though still hardly herself, she received his proffered spoil with a smile, which gave back the sunny look to her face. “I’ve been so alarmed,” she added. “Did you see that person talking to me?”

“No, but I thought I heard voices. Who was it?”

“I can’t imagine, but she looked like some farmer’s daughter from her dress—though there was something superior about her, too. I dare say you can see her from the path. Yes, there she is.”

“Oh ! I know her,” said Ernest colouring a little, he knew not why.

“I thought you must, from the way she spoke. You’ll hardly believe how she frightened me—she looked so wild ! And as she went away, her words sounded quite ominous, though more from her manner than what she said.”

“Her manner may be strange, but she wouldn’t wilfully annoy you,” replied Ernest, “though she naturally startled you a little, coming upon you unexpectedly. See ! she is looking back.”—And he waved his hand.

The girl, who had been walking at a quick pace, stood still a moment, but presently resumed her progress, without responding to his recognition. Emily suddenly became very grave, and looked in another direction.

“I’m afraid I’ve tired you with so much walking,” said Ernest. “Would you like to go home ?”

“Just as you please,” answered Emily. “But here is Miss Cramboy, who seems to be seeking us.”

The governess, whose appearance might be summed up in the immortal description—“fat, fair, and forty,” was sweeping towards them in great state, and it was amusing to observe, as she drew nigh, the studied propriety of every part of her dress, and the measured decorum of her step and carriage. Holding her parasol aloft at an angle of 45, she curtsied to Ernest in the style of Louis Quatorze, while he, regarding her with sincere respect, met her with equal politeness.

“You must come in now, Emily,” she said, “or you’ll scarcely have time to dress for dinner.” And she added, in an under tone: “How *could* you, my dear?—*so* improper!”

“What have I done?” asked Emily, confounded.

Miss Cramboy looked extremely shocked in reply, when Ernest, who saw the by-play, and could not conceive what it meant, came to Emily's relief by accosting the governess, and keeping her in conversation till they reached the house.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SCHOOLMISTRESS AT HOME.

MISS FELICIA CRAMBOY should have been captain of a man-of-war. The Navy List, with all its martinets, could not have produced a stricter disciplinarian, or, perhaps, a more consummate tactician. In her estimation, one great point in life was appearances; and she required the decks, so to speak, to be always nicely hollistoned, the rigging complete, and the ship in beautiful order. Not that the condition of the crew—of the mind within—was an object of indifference to

her: she was just as desirous that the vessel should be well found as she was that it should be well kept; and though having an eye to show, was equally eager for service.

In respect to tactics, Miss Cramboy's capacity was proved, to the satisfaction of every one, in the ascendancy she had gained over Mr. Burge. The very pride of the ironmaster became in her hands an instrument for his subjugation; and by dexterously appealing to his vanity, at the same time that she made him tremble at his deficiencies, she had brought him, by degrees, to regard her as at once a monitor, a counsellor, and a guide. In this manner, the once poor despised governess became an oracle and authority in the household; and it must be owned that, if the means by which she sought her ends were sometimes equivocal, her influence was used for good, and acted as

a check on the arbitrary disposition of the master.

The truth was, Miss Cramboy had a will of her own, which, had occasion served, she would have been ready to enforce with a high hand, but, being in a dependent position, she maintained her supremacy by tact. Thus, even when appearing to give way, she was merely manœuvring, and at the critical moment, dashed forward, and, by a stratagem, secured the victory. The pride of learning might have led her to look with contempt on Mr. Burge, had not the latter, by looking up to her, tacitly acknowledged her superiority—a homage which made her forgive and compassionate his defects, while it caused her to feel a genuine interest in his fortunes. Nor could he have followed a better Egeria; for if Miss Cramboy was qualified, on the one hand, to take the command of the Channel fleet,

on the other hand she wanted only a cap and gown to become a learned Professor. Eve did not pluck the fruit from the forbidden tree, in her guilty thirst of knowledge, with more avidity, or more determination, than her ardent daughter gathered it in the field of letters. Languages, algebra, mathematics, the arts and sciences—nothing came amiss to her ; and if the mill of her understanding did not turn it all into grist, it was not from want of industry or diligence. But the chair of Gamaliel is not intended for woman ; and, in her pursuit of abstractions, Miss Cramboy was too often carried away by the rapids of theory, bringing forcibly to mind the Roman Governor's taunt to St. Paul, which, unjust in its first application, remains an imperishable memorial of the instability of human wisdom.

Full of the sentiments manifested at

the hermitage, Miss Cramboy, on reaching the house, followed Emily to her room, determined on a lecture.

“This was really too bad of you, Emily,” she said in a tone of reproach. “You know it is a point on which I have such decided views — such convictions; and nothing could distress me more.”

“I can’t imagine what I have done,” said Emily.

“I can only say, then, all my precepts and instructions have made very little impression upon you. Had it been otherwise, you would not have been alone with a gentleman for more than two hours, walking and talking without restraint. You forget the proprieties, Emily. I believe I have always taught that there are five vowels, and five proprieties, namely—”

“Oh! don’t, dear Miss Cramboy!” cried Emily, deprecatingly.

“Don’t what? What *can* you mean?”

“Don’t repeat the vow—the proprieties. I assure you I never forget them.”

“Emily, I am positively amazed at you. Never forget them indeed! Then, why don’t you put them in practice?—why don’t you act up to them?”

“It was papa’s wish I should show Mr. Glynn over the grounds.”

“And does that alter the case? Your papa naturally speaks as a gentleman, but you should be guided by the acute perceptions of a lady. Had you but hinted at the impropriety of the proceeding, I am sure his strong good sense would readily have admitted the plea. But I’m afraid you were only too willing to go, Emily. I’m afraid you’re like too many other young ladies, rather fond of flirting.”

“How can you think so?” said Emily, looking vexed, and perhaps a little guilty.

“Don’t blush so, I beg,” returned the governess. “There’s scarcely anything so

unbecoming to a young lady as blushing, and you are always doing it. It's nothing but a vicious habit. Now don't fling yourself in a chair, Emily—as if you were a bundle of clothes. One hand—the *left* if you please—sweep lightly behind your dress, so as to bring the drapery gracefully round, and then—on the edge of your chair, Emily — sit on the edge. Now you look as well again.”—And Miss Cramboy, recovering her good humour, laid her hand caressingly on her pupil's head.—“But there's the bell. Make haste down, and whatever you do, dear, mind the proprieties.”—And with these words, the governess sailed out of the room.

Notwithstanding her injunction to be quick, Emily, between the duties of the toilet and her own thoughts, lingered till the last moment before she descended to the ante-room, but fortunately Miss Cram-

boy was equally dilatory, and they made their appearance together.

The governess was very animated during dinner.

“ I hear some ore has been found on your uncle’s property, Mr. Glynn,” she said. “ Have you ascertained how much metal it contains ? ”

“ My uncle has shown it to Mr. Burge, and he thinks favourably of it,” replied Ernest.

“ That is encouraging ; for there are few, I should imagine, so competent to judge of such matters as Mr. Burge. Ah ! my dear sir ”—and she turned to the host—“ what would your ancestor, Sir Eric de Burgh, temp. Edward IV., have said, could he have foreseen your success as a mineralogist.”—Miss Cramboy was a firm believer in the family pedigree, as in everything else that redounded to the honour of the Burges.—“ He would hardly have

grieved over the forfeiture of his broad lands, for his share in Tewkesbury fight, had he known that a remote descendant would, by his judgment and diligence, restore the splendour of his house, and draw a store of wealth from the depths of the earth. It is a triumphant reflection for you, but it is a prouder thing to have the heritage of such a good name, that you may sustain and add to it by good actions."

"Miss Cramboy, ma'am, you're a woman of great feelings, and I honour you for it," said Mr. Burge. "The world is nothing, ma'am, without feelings. A glass of wine with you, ma'am."

Miss Cramboy bent graciously.

"Apropos of mineralogy," she resumed, "what do you think of its sister science, geology, Mr. Glynn? We have a fine field for investigation in our neighbourhood."

“ So much so, it is impossible to look into our mines and pits without being struck by it,” replied Ernest. “ You have no doubt turned our local advantages to account.”

“ Well, we have managed to accumulate a little collection, just sufficient to illustrate the principal textures. Do you know, sir, your daughter”—such was Miss Cramboy’s official designation for Emily—“ is making some progress in the science.”

“ Glad to hear it, ma’am,” replied Mr. Burge.

“ It is indeed very necessary in the present day,” pursued Miss Cramboy; “ for the various departments of physical knowledge are making such strides, there is no saying where they will end. We might almost expect, before we die, to be able to communicate with a man in the moon.”

“ Then, you believe there is a man in

the moon, ma'am?" said Mr. Burge, rather astounded.

"It certainly has inhabitants, whatever may be said to the contrary," answered Miss Cramboy; "but whether they belong to the genus homo, is a point we shall never know till we can fly."

"Our attempts in that direction have always failed," observed Ernest; "and we can no more raise ourselves from the earth now, with all our scientific and mechanical appliances, than Rasselas could in the Happy Valley."

"Rasselas is a fiction," said Miss Cramboy, "and science deals only with facts. It does not follow, because we have failed hitherto, that we should not succeed hereafter. All we have to contend against is the attraction of the earth, and the tenuity of the atmosphere. A flying machine was actually constructed a few years ago, and an association started, under the name of the Aerial Transit Company, to carry

passengers through the air, but it fell to the ground from want of funds."

"Ah!" cried Mr. Burge. "Nothing can be done without funds, and funds can do anything. It's a beautiful thing—a beautiful thing, money!"

The dessert being produced, Miss Cramboy, who had done fair justice to the viands, began to expatiate on the advantages of a vegetable diet.

"The fact is," she observed, "the produce of the earth is our natural food; and only for the artificial state in which we are brought up, we could go every day into the woods, and find a banquet under every tree. What a delightful thing to live on acorns!"

"Only fit for pigs, ma'am," said Mr. Burge.

"You are probably not aware that they contain an immense amount of albumen," returned Miss Cramboy, "and this, in fact, is the great objection to their being

used as an edible, as albumen requires strong digestive power. But there can be no doubt that they are a part of our natural aliment, as the structure of our teeth is expressly adapted for this kind of food."

"Very true, ma'am—regarded in that light," said Mr. Burge, always convinced by the governess's logic, which he thought he should only expose his ignorance by opposing.

"I have been endeavouring to illustrate a series of similar facts at the school this morning, in a lecture on the anatomy of the mouth," resumed Miss Cramboy. "I want the children to understand why they are given teeth, and there is nothing so forcible as instancing familiar things."

"But do you teach the children anatomy, ma'am?" cried Mr. Burge.

"I try to give them a smattering of everything."

"There can be only one objection to

such a course," remarked Ernest, while Mr. Burge, whose self-esteem dreaded the heels of universal education, looked rather clouded. "The children of the poor must leave school before they can understand so much learning, or no doubt it is most desirable that every one should be instructed in the first great truths of natural science. But in this case especially, I should imagine there is a want of time to teach them anything beyond reading and writing."

"Not a want of time, but a want of Welsh," said Miss Cramboy. "That's my difficulty,—for even the schoolmistress talks a dialect hardly to be understood. But I hope in time to be able to inculcate a general knowledge of astronomy, geology, botany, optics, pneumatics, hydrostatics, electricity, heat, magnetism, anatomy, and physiology in general, with—"

"But, ma'am," began Mr. Burge—

“Don’t suppose I take the credit of these great experiments to myself, sir,” said Miss Cramboy, gently averting the impending outburst. “No, the credit, the honour, the effect will be all your own. It is under your sanction that the scheme has been originated, and its success will justly add new dignity to your position, and show how worthy you are to fill it.”

Satisfied with this coup, which completely stifled all Mr. Burge’s objections, Miss Cramboy rose to withdraw, and Ernest, murmuring a parting aside to Emily, flew to open the door. There was nothing he would have liked better than to have gone straight to the drawing-room, but Mr. Burge, as a man who took his ease in his inn, was on a regular allowance of port, and never stirred till it was discussed. Moreover, he was now very eloquent in commendation of Miss Cramboy, whom he pronounced to be a

person of extraordinary genius, and, what was more, great feelings, more than once exclaiming—"what that woman would do, sir, if she only had capital!" Ernest joined eagerly in her praise, though, in fact, he was somewhat doubtful regarding her system of education at the village school, but hoped for the best results from the humbler efforts of Emily.

They heard the sound of music as, after a considerable interval, they were proceeding to the drawing-room, and on entering, Emily was seen at the piano-forte, which naturally brought Ernest to her side.

"Pray don't move yet," he said, as she was rising. "I have a claim upon you from this morning, remember."

"I am such a poor performer," replied Emily.

But she resumed her seat, and played a soft and plaintive air, accompanying the

music with her voice. This, though at first betraying a nervous tremor, gradually acquired great expression and sweetness ; and if, after all, the execution was only of average merit, it seemed a perfect triumph to Ernest, whose ear was unaccustomed to such harmony. At length, it was time to take leave, and he rode off in high spirits, musing all the way home on the incidents of the day.

CHAPTER X.

GUILTY, OR NOT GUILTY?

THE same thoughts still floated in Ernest's mind, when he reached his own chamber, but how long he tumbled on his pillow, and how, when he fell asleep, his dreams brought him in continual contact with Mr. Burge, Emily, Miss Cramboy, and Jessie, associated confusedly with Mr. Glynn, Wordley and Frost, it is unnecessary here to relate. Enough, that he awoke in the morning, after a night thus spent, in a very excited state of mind, with an intuitive perception that

he had at last fairly entered on the great stage of life.

He was unwearied in his attention to Mr. Glynn, who, on his part, seemed to grow more attached to him, though his temper became every day more querulous and trying. Mingled with the Squire's affection, indeed, was a strong leaven of selfishness, which infected and governed his every impulse. If he clung to Ernest—if he leant upon him more and more—it was to engross all his time, and all his thoughts, without heeding, in the pursuit of his own comfort, how he harassed his nephew. And often, after devoting himself to him the whole day, Ernest's only reward was a peevish word, while a spirit of contradiction and habit of finding fault rendered all his efforts to soothe him of no avail.

But if Mr. Glynn was thus hard upon Ernest, much more did he vent his spleen

upon Wordley, to whom he evinced, in his whole demeanour, a decided feeling of hostility, speaking of him with a bitterness and vindictiveness which shocked his younger nephew. But nothing could disturb Wordley's equanimity, or repel his insidious advances. He manifested for Mr. Glynn the same devotion, the same unabated affection, as in former days, and they were only the more apparent at each repulse. Night and day, too, his eye was rivetted on Ernest, following, watching, and tracking him with a tiger's instinct, and more than a tiger's stealth.

In his own rectitude and innocence, Ernest was unconscious of this surveillance, and, having nothing to conceal, went about, when not engaged by Mr. Glynn, in his ordinary way, occupying himself with his studies and pursuits, now varied by frequent visits to Bydvil. Here he became such a favourite with Miss

Cramboy, that she actually permitted him, on one or two occasions, to remain alone with Emily, and even to accompany her to the village school, in defiance of all the proprieties; and Mr. Burge became more and more convinced that he was a young man of excellent feelings, worth a dozen of his cousin Wordley—or would be, some day, when he came into his capital.

But Fortune is least to be trusted at the very moment that she is all smiles. One bright afternoon, Ernest, after a rather close attendance on his uncle, was botanizing on the Moor, when he heard a step approaching, and, raising his eyes, discovered Jessie Clinton.

“Miss Clinton! how glad I am to see you!” he cried. “I can now make my acknowledgments for your assistance the other night. Did you reach home as you wished?”

“Yes, thank you,” was the reply.
“And you?”

“Oh! your directions were so clear, it was impossible to mistake my way. However, I told my uncle the whole story next morning, keeping back only how much I was indebted to you. I hope your absence was not discovered.”

“No, I was supposed to be in my own room,” said Jessie, a flush suffusing her face, for which Ernest could not account. And she added abruptly—“I saw you at Bydvil the next day, in Mr. Burge’s park.”

“You knew me, then?” replied Ernest.
“I waved my hand to you, but you didn’t appear to observe it.”

“You were so far off,” said Jessie, evasively, and looking down.

“Do you know you quite frightened Miss Burge?” continued Ernest.

“She is easily frightened, then. But I thought she was more alarmed about

you than at me. I only told her you were safe, and had got her some of the flowers. Is she growing very pretty, do you think?" — And she stole a quick glance at him.

"What do *you* think?" said Ernest, smiling.

"I hardly looked at her," replied Jessie, "though I thought her beauty was more in her complexion than her features. But they say women are severe judges of each other, in more respects than one."

"I can't admit that. All the kindness of our nature comes from you, and it is scarcely credible you should deny that sympathy to yourselves which you give so freely to us."

"Perhaps it is well to think so. I have tried to cherish the same feeling, but all I know is so opposed to it, I find it impossible."

“What already? — before you have really entered life! This is indeed taking a gloomy view of things, and I hope an unwarranted one; for, though you may speak from a certain kind of experience, you must not judge of human nature from the contracted sphere around us.”

“It is the sphere in which I am placed,” said Jessie, dejectedly; “and the only one I am ever likely to move in.”

“You don’t know that,” said Ernest, soothingly—and Jessie gave a scarcely perceptible start. “No one can say what will be their future. If I thought mine would be confined to this place, I might look on it as despondingly as you do: for a life so inactive, and so aimless, is anything but what I desire. But we may find even here something to interest us, and we can all make a future for ourselves, in our own anticipations.”

“And will it ever be realized, Mr.

Glynn? No! I have cherished such anticipations, and what have they led me to? You see! I have, as you say, hardly entered life, and yet I find it a blank."

"Then, had you not better have kept looking cheerfully forward, instead of mourning over what is beyond help? Very likely, events may bring me as much disappointment as they seem to have done you: the path of life is not always smooth to any one, and I have no expectation of an exception in my favour; but why should we foreshadow evil? I dream of a better time—a time when I shall take a part in the world—and that almost reconciles me to the present."

"I have dreamt too much," said Jessie, with a sigh. "That may be one reason why I am so discontented."

"But have you any real ground for discontent?" said Ernest. "Life seems all sad to you now, because you have com-

menced it with a reverse of fortune. You are thrown down here, from a station you were well qualified to fill, to herd with people little removed from savages: you find yourself without friends or companions, and without suitable employment: and the ignorance and superstition around you are so gross, so universal, that you accept them yourself. But throw them from you, and you have the power of improving your own situation, while your example may benefit others."

Jessie shook her head. "Who will care for my example," she said, the tears gathering in her eyes. "That at least can have no effect."

"There is no station so humble but it has its influence," rejoined Ernest, "and yours will be felt among the farm-servants, in your own household. You have no opportunity to be their teacher; but they may, and no doubt do, look to you as a

pattern. We are all here to work out a certain destiny, which we may in some measure shape ourselves. You are not placed in the world by accident, but by Providence; and it is well to bear continually in mind that Providence has a purpose in all things."

"Even in the misery of such a worm as I am!" said Jessie, with something of irony in her tone.

"Yes, even in the fall of a sparrow," said Ernest, "as we are told; and, on the same Authority, your well-being is considered far more. But I am aware we differ on these points."

"No, no, we do not! Will you forgive my cavilling? I agree in all you have said—in all you have told and taught me! and I have wholly given up the Mormons—I wonder how I could ever have joined them! But I should have gone on, sinking lower and lower, if you hadn't rescued

me. You have snatched me from them, body and soul!"

"Not I—I have done nothing," said Ernest. "But come! we will say no more of it now: it excites you too much. And you look fatigued. Will you sit down on the bank here, and rest yourself?"

It was a pleasant spot, and the sun, which had scarcely shown himself all the Spring, had come forth that day in bridegroom splendour, throwing a bright gleam over every object, so that, under this influence, even the old, bleak moor had put on a wedding-robe. But the two friends had but just seated themselves, when a couple of horsemen turned on to the road in front of them, and Ernest was rather disconcerted to perceive his cousin Wordley and Frost.

Wordley, who never forgot his manners, made his cousin a polite bow as he rode

past, at the same time smiling benignantly; but Frost looked the picture of jealousy and rage.

“I must go home now,” said Jessie, who had turned very pale, “or that man will be there before me.”

“I think you need hardly apprehend that,” replied Ernest. “He is no doubt going over the land with my cousin; and it will be some time before their rounds are completed. But would you like me to walk to the farm with you?”

“No—I think not,” answered Jessie, a strange expression passing over her face. “I had better go alone.”—Yet she still lingered.

“The fellow keeps looking back,” observed Ernest.

“I shouldn’t mind his watching me—as he does now more than ever,” said Jessie, “but he sees everything through a false light. But no matter! I am not

so afraid of him as I was, and I shall try to be less so."

"A wise resolution!" said Ernest, "for Frost is a man who will trample upon you, if he thinks you fear him."

"Then, I will not!—no, let him say what he will! I feel more cheerful now! Your advice has done me so much good, and made me see things so differently, that I shall meet him in quite another spirit. Thank you again, Mr. Glynn, for all your kindness."

They parted; and Ernest, fearing the construction which might be placed on their rencontre by his cousin, retraced his steps to Glynnellan in a mood harmonizing little with that in which he had set out.

And what were the thoughts of Jessie? What was it that, as she walked away, made her forget her intention of hurrying home—forget Frost and his machinations,

and think only of what had been told her by Ernest—of Ernest's sympathy, of Ernest himself? Every one has heard of the clown who was transformed by love into an Adonis; but transformations as strange, and as complete, take place around us continually, and are never noted or seen. Such was the change in the character of this young girl! It had been her ambitious dream that she should contract a fortunate marriage, which would raise her, in the happiest and most congenial mode, to a superior station; and hence had arisen that pride in her personal attractions, that love of admiration and distinction, which made an obscure and monotonous existence a trial and a burden. Her only solace, indeed, had been the secret reveries of her own imagination, the suggestions of a romantic disposition, and the reverent homage of the country boors. She waited, longed,

pined for an opportunity of appearing, as she had every right to appear, in a wider and higher field, where her hopes and wishes might possibly be realized; and her heart truly sickened at the deferred result. And now she had been brought face to face with the nephew, perhaps the heir, of her father's landlord, under circumstances calculated to excite a singular interest on both sides, and what had been the effect on her feelings, expectations, and prospects?

She no longer remembered her ambitious project—her own aggrandizement—herself: all she thought of was *him*—his generosity, his courage, his manly and noble sentiments! What was fortune, to a woman's eye—what rank, what station, in comparison with these? All the romance of her nature was kindled and inflamed by their first interview; and, from that moment, she strove by recalling

his words, by dwelling on all he had said and looked, to model herself, in some degree, by the standard of his excellence. Not till she saw him in company with Emily was she conscious how far this ecstasy had beguiled and entrapped her. Then the quick pang of jealousy, sharper than a serpent's sting, struck the fell truth into her mind. She loved him!—loved without hope, and without return!

But nature is a strange mystery. This young girl, who had appeared so frivolous, almost heartless, now stood forth a gentle, tender, and impassioned being. She had cast the slough of her selfishness, as the butterfly, awaking from its long sleep, casts its shroud; and had come out as delicate and as beautiful. Her whole character was refined, spiritualized. No sordid or unworthy sentiment, no selfish instinct, now warped or perverted it; and a flood of innocent feelings gave a new

light to her existence, making her, for the time, unconscious of its hopelessness. Under the spell of this trance she was happy! All she wished was to be in Ernest's presence, to see him, to hear him speak, or, in his absence, to be able to think of him still. Thus she nourished and deepened the passion which had seized on her entire being. Her steps now were always directed towards Glynnellan, and several times, to her great joy, the hope which had led her thither was realized, and she met and conversed with Ernest. Nor was her infatuation dispelled by the fact, that Ernest, while evincing a deep interest in her welfare, always maintained a bearing impossible to misconstruction, and was obviously unsuspecting of the passion he had inspired. Love, especially in woman's breast, burns not the less brightly from being unseen.

Meanwhile, Ernest's position at the

Keep underwent a sensible change, and he could not conceal from himself, as time wore on, that he had greatly declined in his uncle's favour. Mr. Glynn had become as sullen as he was irritable, and Ernest frequently found his eye fixed upon him, with an expression far from reassuring. Sometimes, he thought Wordley, who daily recovered something of his former influence, had once more set the old man against him, but that wily diplomat was so kind and caressing in his manner, that he could not admit the suspicion. He determined, however, on the first opportunity, to come to an explanation with his uncle, and full of this intention, was one morning following him from the room after breakfast, when Mr. Glynn turned sharply round, and told him that he did not require his attendance.

Ernest was no less hurt than humiliated by this repulse; and leaving the house,

he strolled moodily into the park, where he threw himself on a bench, absorbed in the thoughts which the incident inspired.

What could have instigated such a change in Mr. Glynn's feelings towards him? Did his favour depend on so frail a tenure, that every little current of temper, however unprovoked, could dictate its withdrawal? If so, he had better abandon the field at once, as his whole nature recoiled from a servitude so debasing. For the moment, resentment, brooding over repeated affronts, was stronger in his breast than affection, and he resolved to bear such a yoke no longer, but to ask the old man to put him in some way of earning his own livelihood, that he might attain a position which, if it were ever so humble, would at least be honourable, and free from the taint of dependence. More than once, too, it flashed across his mind that Mr. Glynn had been informed

of his having been observed in company with Jessie, and had been led to conclude that they were maintaining a clandestine acquaintance, whence, after some consideration, he began to perceive the danger which might result from their being seen together, and resolved to avoid all occasion of meeting her in future. But resolutions are more easily made than carried out: Ernest was still deep in meditation, when he saw Jessie approaching, and the next moment she was at his side.

“I was just thinking about you, Jessie,” said Ernest.

“Were you?” replied Jessie, her face lighting up. “That was very kind of you.”

“You won’t think so when I tell you I was as much interested for myself as for you. I shall be going away soon, and I wished to bid you good bye.”

“Are you going for long?” said Jessie, with a slight tremor in her tone.

“I hardly know yet. It is just possible I may never return—at least not for many years.”

“Is not this sudden?”

“The resolution, but not the project; for I have been thinking of it a good deal lately.”

“How sad!” said Jessie, her eyes fixed on the ground.

“What! to go out and see the world!”

“Not for you. I was thinking of myself—how desolate I shall be when you are gone, with no one to advise or direct me, no one to encourage me to good.”—And she wore such an abstracted look, that she seemed to be more thinking than speaking, as if she addressed herself rather than him.

“I thought you saw these things from another point now, Jessie,” said Ernest, all his sympathy aroused by her distress.

“I’ve tried to look Up, but can’t. Everything seems so against me.”

“Still the same gloomy view of your condition.”

“I can never take any other.”

“Then you have not yet shaken off the materiality of the Mormons. No doubt you have your trials, but life has a bright side as well as a dark one, and we must balance the good against the evil.”

“But if it is all evil?”

“That can only be where there is crime — where the evil is in our own minds. I often feel as dissatisfied with my situation as you can be with yours, and never more than at this moment; but reflection tells me it may be materially improved by my own efforts, and to them I must look for a remedy.”

“It may be so with you, for you have everything the world can give.”—And as Ernest shook his head, she added—“At least, you can choose your own path, and

your own pursuits. That is open to all men. But women must take whatever fortune may send them; our portion is endurance."

"Endurance is the badge of all our race," replied Ernest—"of the strongest and most unscrupulous, as well as the feeble. We may murmur—we may resist; but, after all, we are obliged to submit. No man can vanquish fortune. Call it Providence, and half the burden is removed."

"If the smart is the same, does it matter who inflicts it?"

"Most certainly. Assured that the Great Disposer is essentially a Being of love and compassion, we shall feel consoled under His heaviest visitations, knowing they are designed for some good end. This is our discipline for a future state, and is not without effect in the present. If we never suffered, we could never feel.

Human sympathy and human kindness would be dead, and we should be more discontented than we are now. I am glad I've been able to say this to you ; for you may remember it when I am away, and I shall feel consoled myself in having cheered and encouraged you."

"You are always so considerate," said Jessie, averting her head. "I hope you will prosper and be happy."

Ernest bade her adieu, and she walked slowly away, leaving him standing alone. A low sob, which escaped from her involuntarily, showed how deeply she was moved ; and had it reached Ernest's ear, might have recalled him to her side. But as it was, he suffered her to depart unconsolated, though he watched her retiring figure, as she disappeared among the trees, with equal interest and sympathy.

Turning round, he found himself con-

fronted by Mr. Glynn, who had approached from an adjacent cover, in company with Farmer Clinton.

“So you are unmasked now, sir!” said Mr. Glynn, with an indignant glance. “I have witnessed your proceedings, and can no longer doubt your infamy.”

“Since you address such language to me, perhaps you will tell me what I have done to provoke it, sir!” replied Ernest hardly less excited.

“Nothing — of course nothing!” returned Mr. Glynn, in his bitterest tone, “though here is a poor man, the father of your miserable dupe, who may view your conduct in another light.”

Ernest’s eye sought the farmer, who stood looking at him in his usual stolid way, but made no remark.

“If I have injured Mr. Clinton, let him speak,” exclaimed Ernest. “Let me know what I am accused of—what I have

to answer for. I am ready to meet every inquiry."

"I will make but one," said Mr. Glynn, sternly. "I ask you if you have not just parted from Mr. Clinton's daughter."

"Us see her wi you, young mairster," observed the farmer, with a sudden glimmer of interest.

"And is that all my offence?" returned Ernest.

"That all! yes, sir, and enough too!" exclaimed Mr. Glynn. "What object can you have in view but disgrace to her family or dishonour to your own. That all! You think it no crime, then, to be following this girl about the country, meeting her now in one place and now in another, beguiling her from her home and her duties, causing the greatest anxiety to her father, and holding her up to public scandal! All this is quite correct in your estimation!"

“Far from it, sir,” replied Ernest. “If I were capable of such conduct, I should be base indeed! But I deny it. I have never met Miss Clinton but by accident.”

“Say no more, sir!” cried Mr. Glynn, fiercely. “It is in keeping with your perfidy to endeavour to screen it by falsehood. Fume as you please, you shall hear me out! This is a likely spot, truly, for an accidental meeting with a person who resides five miles off, and who has frequently been observed loitering here till you join her! But I waste words on one lost alike to honour and truth. From this moment I discard you. Tomorrow you will know what is the only provision now remaining to you; and, for the future you may act as you please.” —And he moved away, before Ernest could reply.

“So I have to thank *you* for this!”

said Ernest to the farmer, who still regarded him with a vacant stare. "Or you are deceived yourself, and believe I have wronged you, because others have told you so!"

"Don't know, young gen'lman," replied the farmer. "Don't think so bad as Squire nayther—only Muster Frost he say you'n up't no good. My girl she'rnt no fool, howzever; but wenches mun be looked after; and, tellin' no lie, you pulled her out o' staith when she were near sinkin'. She'rnt been the same since." —Here the farmer, quite exhausted by his long speech, took off his hat, from which he drew forth a handkerchief, and wiped the huge beads from his brow.

"And I am charged with decoying her from her home!" said Ernest — "by Frost, too!"

"Says you gat her in harness, and keep her in't, and you'n takin' her aff all oot,"

replied Clinton. "Don't mean she hairm, I hope. Her stick oot you wern hid in her room yan night, when Squire Wordley han the search."

"In her room!"

"Muster Frost he think so! but you wern, were you?"

"No!—a thousand times, no!" exclaimed Ernest, vehemently.

"Wern 'ee in the house?"

"Not then. She let me in just before, on my begging admittance; and when they came up, I got out of the dairy-window, and went home across the fields."

"Jest what she say," cried Clinton, slapping his hand on his thigh.

"I have since met her several times," pursued Ernest, "but it has, as I told my uncle, always been by accident, and in public, without any attempt at concealment. I owe it to her, as well as myself, to let you know this."

The farmer scratched his head.—“ Well, it seem feasible, too !” he said after a moment’s cogitation. “ I b’lieve Muster Frost’s a bit too shairp, I do ! Yet don’t know what’s come o’ she, that’s truth. Wun’t go to meetin’, wun’t hear o’ Elder Trevor read the Word, but sit and mope constant. But you’n keep oot of her way a bit, young mairster, will ’ee ?”

“ I’m not likely to see her again for some time,” returned Ernest, who, though still exasperated, was softened by the parental uneasiness of the farmer. “ But I give you my promise, if it will be any satisfaction.”

“ Sure-ly,” said Clinton, “ and take it kind of ’ee, too : so wish ’ee well, young gen’leman.”

And with these words, they parted.

Ernest remained on the spot, absorbed in thought, though his mind was made up as to the course he should pursue. The

project which had long occupied his imagination, of seeking his fortune in the world, now took a tangible shape, and became a necessity. Nor did he look on it with misgiving, or in any spirit of diffidence. If he felt regret at leaving Glynnellan, it was because he was dismissed with disgrace, not from a hankering after its enjoyments. On the contrary, the spirit of independence natural to his character, now emancipated from the yoke of duty, recoiled from everything not won by his own hands. The provision which Mr. Glynn had promised he determined not to accept. Since he was to go, he would set out unaided, and no one should know either the hour of his departure or his destination. At the first dawn of morning, before any of the household were astir, he would bid adieu to Glynnellan, and launch his little raft on the great, turbid sea of life.

CHAPTER XI.

ON THE TRAMP.

LIGHT—the first glance of morning—was just kindling in the east, as Ernest started from his couch. A carpet-bag, containing such articles as he could strictly call his own, lay ready at hand, having been packed over-night; and eager to quit Mr. Glynn's roof, he soon completed his preparations. But before setting out, he commended himself to the care of that Power which had become his sole dependence, and which, even in that moment,

he felt to be a safer reliance than friends, lands, or fortune.

Descending the stairs, he took a last look round the hall, now swathed in deep shadow, and softly opening the door, passed out.

It was a lowering and dismal morning. Dark, rolling clouds, just tinged with the dawning light, hung from the heavens in fleecy masses, big with storm and rain. A mist lay on the earth, like a shroud, and the trees peered through it, as Ernest walked along, solemn and motionless, like mourners. A sullen gloom enveloped every object, and by degrees communicated itself, with strange power, to Ernest's mind, as if it were prophetic of his destiny.

There was much in his situation to awaken such a feeling, and to throw a shadow on the path before him. The hopes he had latterly been led to cherish,

through the favour and even promises of his uncle, had been suddenly extinguished ; and he was parting from all he knew and loved, as well as from ties and friendships but too recently formed, for what must at best be a severe and protracted struggle. And, in his own dejection, he gave more than one thought to the hapless girl who had been the innocent cause of his disgrace, and for whose welfare he felt an interest as pure as it was sincere.

But when was youth long daunted or dispirited ? The Almighty Disposer, in His comprehensive providence, adapting our capacity to our need, beneficently endows that period of life with unfailing elasticity and hopefulness ; and the hard wisdom of man in vain holds up to our eyes the example of its own experience, as a lesson, a restraint, and a warning. Youth sees nothing in his onward career but the path to prosperity and success.

The future may appear a blank to older men; but to him, with the poetry of nature still throbbing in his breast, it seems full of promise; and, like some fine picture of Turner's, shows a thousand bright tints through its veil.

Ernest's spirits rallied at every step. Although, at first, he could elicit no augury of good from the leaden sky, imagination was not slow to supply a presage, which soothed, consoled, and cheered him; and the sweet sentiment of Dibdin, none the less expressive for its homely dress, came forcibly to his mind—

“Many a dark and cloudy morning
Turns out a sunshiny day.”

Memory recalled more than one example to confirm the poet's testimony, and flatter him with a similar prospect. To his eager mind and active ambition, difficulties, indeed, offered no discouragement, but rather appeared the stepping-stones to

distinction, The thought of the solitary lad who, lying by the river side, determined, by his own exertions, to recover the inheritance of his fathers, and carried out his pious resolution, lent him both courage and confidence; and he did not reflect that every one is not a Warren Hastings, or that the great child of fortune, putting his genius aside, had the advantage of starting from a position peculiarly auspicious, under the protection of influential connexions, while he owed no little obligation to the fortuitous aid of events. Ernest began the great struggle under circumstances far different—with but a few pounds in his purse, and not a single available friend in the world! Yet, like the conqueror of India, he had what was better than money or friends—a vigorous intellect, a practical and well-stored mind, and a generous, courageous, and honest heart.

If he had no one to attest these facts, nature, the best patron, had written them on his face. His frank, free look, his modest yet manly bearing, his prepossessing address, appealing at once to the understanding and the feelings, disarmed mistrust, and inspired the most wary with confidence and faith. And to meet the difficulties before him, he possessed a cheerful and enduring disposition, a bold spirit, and an inexhaustible buoyancy of temperament, with a strong reliance on himself, and a stronger in Heaven.

Like all adventurers, he bent his steps towards London. His little stock of money, about twenty pounds—a gift he had received from his uncle some months before, on coming of age, would have admitted of his travelling by coach; but he was too deeply impressed with the example of the standard adventurers of

fiction, as they are represented in the pages of Smollett and Scott, not to prefer performing the journey on foot. Thought was busy in his mind, and he walked along for several hours, at a brisk pace, before he made a halt. Then he stopped to breakfast at a road-side inn, but after a brief rest, resumed his progress.

The sun, wading through a sea of cloud, like a weary bather, now shed a gleam of transient brightness over the landscape, and the change gave fresh animation to Ernest, as, aroused from his reflections, he cast his eye over the blooming hedges and the green fields, the waving corn, and the glorious old woods, inhaling with the balmy air the sweet inspiration of nature. Health and freedom came bounding down from the verdant hills, and dancing over the meadows, while the jocund skylark floated overhead, making the air resound with his melody,

and all things rejoiced at the first faint smile of summer.

Evening found Ernest some way on his road, though it was, in fact, but a fraction of the long distance before him. Resting for the night at an inn, he rose with the dawn, and ere the day closed, had covered fifty miles from Glynnellan. For several days he proceeded in the same way, and at length, after an interval of a week, arrived, weary and footsore, at a small alehouse, which he conceived to be not very far from the end of his journey. Here, though appearances were not very inviting, he proposed to pass the night, and at once made his way to the public room, and threw himself into a chair.

Three men were seated together round an adjacent table, and looked up as he entered, but immediately renewed their conversation, leaving him to discuss his supper unobserved.

One of the party was a tall, gaunt, ungainly-looking man, dressed in a somewhat worn suit of black, with trousers rather shrunk, showing a pair of cumbersome high-lows. His chair was tipped back on the hind legs, so as to form a sort of incline, and on this, reckless of all principles of equilibrio, he lounged back against the wall, having his large, clumsy feet hanging down in front, like a couple of balance-weights. His face wore an expression of mingled simplicity and cunning, to which the spectacles on his nose, evidently as much a fixture as the nose itself, gave a comic effect, though there was no want of intelligence on his large, broad brow, and the development of the head was exceedingly striking. He was addressed by his companions as Old Parr, which proved to be an abbreviation of Parkyns.

Next to him sat a short, spare man,

looking all the smaller from the force of contrast. As if this were not enough, he wore a swallow-tailed coat, which, besides, was excessively short-waisted, and the effect, when he stood up, was to throw all his stature into his legs, leaving him scarcely any body. Blank and sullen features, a dull eye, at which the soul never looked out, and a leaden complexion, betokened one whose purposes it would be difficult to penetrate, and who fought in the lists of life with his vizor down. To add to the disagreeable impression, he had a habit of fixing his eyes on his companions, whenever he looked up, in such a manner as called forcibly to mind the gaze of a snake, insomuch that it would not have been difficult to imagine he was about to make a spring, and fasten on them with his fangs.

The third man was of middle stature, and middle age; and, though the day

was warm, was muffled in one of those thick, stifling overalls called a pea-jacket, buttoned up to the chin, and which, indeed, he wore throughout the year, without reference to summer or winter. He was lolling against the table, in the calm enjoyment of a pipe, only joining in the conversation by an occasional remark, not calculated to provoke discussion.

A scroll of paper, like a chart or building-plan, lay on the table, and, to an experienced eye, this, with something peculiar in their appearance, would have furnished a clue to the calling of the trio, who, in truth, belonged to a class which had just sprung into existence, in connexion with the vast railway works in progress, being assistants of the eminent civil engineer, Isaac Colville, and now engaged, under his direction, on the Great Hirlemdown Railway.

“ This is what I like,” observed he of

the leaden hue, who bore the name of Wormwood. "I wanted a friend, and if ever there was a person possessed in a remarkable degree of the qualities suited to friendship, here he sits."—And he laid his hand on the tall man's arm.—"Give us your paw, old fellow! It's a comfort to feel the grasp of a good honest hand like your's—and the hand of a clever man, too, who'll come out strong some day. Parr—I don't care who knows it—I admire your abilities. Come, Blouser!"—and he nudged the pea-jacket with his elbow—"let's drink old Parr in a mug of his own mixture. The health of Mr. Parkyns!"

"Upstanding, uncovered," responded Blouser. "Hip! hip!—once more, hip!—another, all together—hip!"

Parkyns rose with as much solemnity as if he were about to address a multitude, and Ernest, whose attention had been

attracted by the scene, was concerned to observe that his feelings were really touched, though it was evident he was only the butt of Wormwood.

“ If I were merely to call this the proudest moment of my life,” he exclaimed, “ I should say but little ; for it is also the most agreeable, and I cannot sufficiently evince my gratification at the sentiments expressed by my worthy friend Wormwood. This I say without fear of contradiction. I appreciate and reciprocate Wormwood’s friendship, and I venerate his exalted ideas in connexion with it. We’re all engaged in a great work, and we work together ; we *pull* together, my boys ; we live in concord, and are friends.”

“ Friends !” echoed Wormwood, fixing his eyes on the ceiling. “ Isn’t it so, Blouser ?”

“ Go ahead !” cried Blouser.

“As to Wormwood’s opinion of my abilities, I thank him,” pursued Parkyns. “I believe I *have* had some experience on railroads, but whether I shall ever come out in the way Wormwood expects, is yet to be seen.”—A cry of “hear, hear,” from Wormwood.—“But I believe I’ve done my duty by the G. H. R., as we all have; and we’ve made the contractors do their’s. I. C. gets all the credit, but I should like to know who does the work. Granted, I. C. draws the plans, and they’re not bad, but it’s one thing to turn arches on paper, and another to turn them with bricks—as *we* do!”

“That’s about it,” observed Blouser. “Our side again!”

“I won’t say anything about a certain person,” remarked Wormwood, cautiously refraining from any direct allusion to Isaac Colville; “but this I will say—that the G. H. R. owes a good deal to

you, old fellow! I'll speak up for my friend. Friendship has its duties, as well as its pleasures; and one of these is to uphold your friend's character and reputation. Old Parr, I respect you."

"Thank'ee, Wormwood, my boy," said Parkyns. "There are very few in the world for whom I entertain the same regard I do for you and our mutual friend Blouser; and few whose good opinion I so value. As for I. C., no one can think more highly of his abilities than I do, and I'm the last person in the world to underrate his bridges. But I've got an idea of a bridge myself, with an arch of a thousand feet span, which I think beats him hollow. I dropped an inkling of it once to old Butler, the contractor, and he offered me five hundred a-year on the spot, to be his Clerk of Works. But, my boys, I'm a gentleman, and I'll only follow a gentleman's occupation. I'd

rather be one of I. C.'s subs, at a nominal honorarium, than have a thousand a-year from old Butler, or any other contractor. That's what I call acting like a gentleman!"—And with these words, he resumed his seat.

"You're a man of genius, old Parr," cried Wormwood. "There's poetry in what you say, and the genuine cream of friendship, which is the best cream going."

As he spoke, he gave a sly push to Parkyns's chair, which, resting only on the hind legs, immediately tipped over, and sent its occupant sprawling on the floor.

This mishap elicited a loud laugh from Blouser, which broke into a roar when Wormwood, with an air of concern, sprang to Parkyns's assistance, in his hurry jostling purposely against the table, and knocking over a pewter mug, the contents of which descended on Parkyns's face.

“What are you about?” cried the fallen man, half drowned in porter.

“Ease her—stop her!” screamed Blouser.

“Hold your tongue, Blouser, can’t you?” cried Wormwood, quite serious. “Are you hurt, old fellow? Here, catch hold!”—And seizing Parkyns’s hand, he raised him up. “However did you turn up that way?”

“It’s that confounded old chair,” exclaimed Parkyns, wiping his face with his handkerchief.

“All serene!” said Blouser. “Off she goes!”—And he rose to depart.

“Don’t go yet,” said Wormwood. “Come, old Parr, sit down again, and make your life miserable. Why, what a fellow you are, to be upset by such a trifle. You’re too sensitive by half. And look! you’ve spilt all the mixture. Let’s replenish!”

"I'm not going to have any more," returned Parkyns, sulkily.—And he rang the bell.—"Here, landlord, what's to pay?"

"York, you're wanted," observed Blou-ser, tapping himself on the chest. And he paid his own share of the reckoning, and walked out.

"What a bore!" said Wormwood, after rummaging all his pockets. "I changed my waistcoat this morning, and must have left my money in it. Parr, my boy, you pay for me, and I'll give it you again."

"You owe me ever so much already," said the ruffled Parkyns.

"My dear fellow, do you throw it up to me?" muttered Wormwood—"a gentleman like you! Is this acting like a friend?"

Somewhat pacified by this appeal, but still grumbling, Parkyns paid the score,

and sallied forth, with Wormwood clinging affectionately to his arm; and Ernest, stepping to the window, saw them join Blouser without, and all walk off together.

CHAPTER XII.

THE GREAT HIRLEMDOWN RAILWAY.

THE year 1838 was the epoch of railways. Great lines were in course of construction in every quarter, and there was not a town of any importance, from one end of the country to the other, that had not its railway in progress or in contemplation. Railways were the rage, and never was there so good a rage before.

Of all the projects on foot, the Great Hirlemdown Railway, intended to connect the metropolis with the rising city of

Hirlemdown, was one of the best and greatest. The originality of its design, the marked peculiarities of its structure, and its extraordinary magnitude, had attracted universal attention ; and scientific men watched its progress with especial interest. The line was already marked out, and the levels laid, through its whole extent ; the ground was partially broken in numerous places, and bridges and viaducts were rising at various points, like advanced posts, to attest, by their dimensions, its colossal and massive character. Thousands of men were engaged on the works, and wherever its engineers appeared, the country became alive with bustle, traffic, and population.

As Ernest proceeded on his way, he was not slow to observe this vitality ; but his route lying over a part of the line hidden in a cutting, it was not till he reached the bridge thrown across it that

the great undertaking met his view. Then, though the cutting was of insignificant depth, he looked down on the imperfect road with a feeling of wonder, as if its extent and character had but that moment entered his mind. After a brief pause, he strolled along by the side of the line for some twenty yards, that he might look back at the face of the bridge, and note the general effect. There was a party of five men in the cutting, three of whom, as he drew nearer, he recognised as the guests at the inn on the previous day—Wormwood, Parkyns, and Blouser; and the other two were of the labouring class, and ran hither and thither, with a measuring tape in their hands, as they were directed. The engineers, in fact, were taking the dimensions of the cutting, a task of some difficulty, as owing to the inequalities of the ground above, its depth varied with every few yards.

"Here you are," cried Parkyns to Wormwood: "throw the tape across here, or you won't get the mean."

"It's very mean of you to say so," said Wormwood, who was a bad punster. "Ha! ha! ha!"

The two attendants echoed the laugh; but it fell dead on the ear of Parkyns, who appreciated no jokes but his own; while Blouser, however well inclined, was extremely dense in this respect.

"Well, let it stand for the present," said Parkyns; "and being on duty, I vote we send for something to eat."

"Carried, nem. con.," cried Wormwood, always ready for a regale. "As a friend, I support your proposition, G. H. R being paymaster."

"Only we mustn't be too strong," observed Parkyns. "We've had a can of mixture already, remember."

"All goes down for refreshments,"

replied Wormwood; "and G. H. R.'s got a long purse."

"No friends—hit him again!" remarked Blouser.

"Perhaps we'd better finish the job first," said Parkyns, "though I'm so dry, I'm almost choking. Here, you Riley, just give me some mixture."

"Ah! then you're a funny gentleman, Mr. Parkyns, sir," replied the attendant, a good-humoured Irishman. "Sure, Mr. Blouser's drained out the can, sir."

"Gently over the stones, Pat," cried Blouser. "Last horse, last drink."

"And Riley was certainly the last horse himself," said Wormwood, who had no liking for the Irishman, "or perhaps I should say the last ass. I saw his gills in the can directly you laid it down."

"Ah! then it's yourself 'ud make a cow laugh, Mr. Wormwood, sir," said

Riley. "Sure, you know I'm a timperance man, and dursn't dhrink any liquor stronger nor wather."

"Do you mean to say I didn't see the spout in your mouth?"

"May-be you did, sir; but do you know what I was doin' wid it?"

"Sucking it like a leech."

"Faix, I can't help laughin', Mr. Wormwood, sir, you're such a funny gentleman. No! but I was doin' penance wid it, sir."

"Penance!"

"Jest that same, sir, and I'll tell you my raisins for it. When I obsarved you takin' such a pull—

"Me, you vagabond!" said Wormwood, while Parkyns and Blouser laughed at his chagrin.

"Sure, you was dhry, sir," rejoined Pat, amidst renewed applause from Parkyns and Blouser—"very dhry you war,

no doubt. And as I was tellin' your honour, when I obsarved you takin' such a dhrink"—here Wormwood burst out again—"I'll spake the rale truth," pursued Pat, "I wished it was myself; for I was scorched to a cinder. Then, says I, Pat, says I, wouldn't you like a dhrop of the mixture now? If you plaise, darlint, says I. Then it isn't much of it you'll taste, you spalpeen, says I. Are you after mindin' the pledge you took of the blessed Father Mattew? says I. Now, jest take up the can, says I, and put it to your mout, and dhrink a dhrop of it at your peril, my jewel, says I: and I hope every dhrop 'ull go down into your carcase like bog-wather, says I. So I up's with the spout, sir—"

"And emptied the can," observed Parkyns, good-temperedly.

"It's quite clear Riley isn't to be trusted," said Wormwood, "and in future,

the can had better be carried by Wilkinson."

"Sure your honour," began Pat—

"You shall keep it, Pat," cried Parkyns—"never fear. And now, come, if we're to finish, we'd better go on. Here, Wilkinson, take the end of the tape, and hold it down over there, at the foot of the slope."

The tape was stretched across, and Parkyns was stooping to ascertain the width, when Wormwood, who had an ape's predilection for mischief, and was now in a spiteful humour, knocked his hat over his eyes, at the same time exclaiming—"Now, Blouser, what are you at?"

"Mild!" cried Blouser, in a warning voice—"draw it mild, old fellow!"

"I'll tell you what it is, Wormwood, I won't stand this chaff," said Parkyns, in a rage. "Why don't you play off your

jokes on Blouser? You know he won't stand it, and I won't either. I'm a gentleman, and I insist on being treated as such."

"And don't I always do so?" said Wormwood. "Every one can see you're a gentleman, without your mentioning it; besides which, I respect your talents, and have a great friendship for you. But—"

He broke off abruptly, and catching up the tape, commenced measuring with great assiduity, while Blouser mechanically took down the dimensions, and Parkyns, not yet restored to good humour, looked sulkily on. Ernest continued to watch their proceedings; and having picked up some practical knowledge from his uncle's surveyor, by attending him on various occasions, soon saw they were going wrong.

"You'll never get the average there,"

he cried, in a frank, good-natured way. "You must measure here, and a few yards further on, at the top, bottom, and centre."

All looked up at these words.

"Hilloa, Daniel! where have you come from?" cried Parkyns.

"Your ma' aware of your being out?" asked Blouser.

"Why don't you do what he tells you?" cried a voice from the opposite side.

The inquiry seemed to petrify the whole party, with the single exception of Wormwood, who, indeed, had discerned the speaker before he had reached the spot, and so had had time to assume an appearance of diligence. He thought it politic, however, to pretend surprise, when, on raising his eyes, he saw on the bank Isaac Colville himself, attended by two of his principal assistants.

The great engineer was somewhat below the middle stature, of a compact and closely-set frame, to which a rather large head, slightly inclined on one side, seemed appropriately fitted. A fresh and ruddy complexion made his face appear handsome, though the features were by no means regular; and it borrowed a light and animation from his quick, thoughtful eye, which added to the agreeable impression. He wore a long blue surtout, almost approaching to a greatcoat; and as he stood on the edge of the bank, with his hands crossed behind, looking down into the cutting, he reminded Ernest of the picture of Napoleon at St. Helena—an effect, perhaps, not altogether accidental.

On the right of the autocrat was his grand vizier, Mr. Hammer, who, from his usually appearing in a yellow macintosh, was known on the line by the soubriquet

of the Yellow-hammer. He was a tall, good-conditioned-looking man, with a sanctimonious cast of countenance, indicative of his taste for amateur preaching; and, though apparently so much in favour, did not really stand high with his master, who appraised his mediocrity at its right value, and used him merely as an overseer.

The other aide-de-camp was a young man, very tall and very thin, with that bowed and drooping chest, so often met with in this country, which tells its own story of disease. His name was Pool, and as he made it a point never to commit himself in speech, always confining his conversation to a few set phrases, he had been described by Parkyns, in one of his convivial moments, as a very smooth Pool, which would never drown anybody.

In the panic occasioned by the appearance of the triumviri, the party below,

instead of acting on Ernest's suggestion, became so confused, that they went back to their old measurements, directly in the face of what they had been told.

"You see they don't understand you," cried the great man to Ernest. "Why don't you show them?"

Ernest was down in the cutting in an instant. Taking the tape from the obsequious hand of Wormwood, and throwing the end of it to Pat Riley, he ran to the proper spots, before Mr. Hammer, who had hastened to show his zeal in the presence of his chief, could hurry down the slope, and having accomplished his object, entered the dimensions in Wormwood's memorandum-book.

"Have you done it?" inquired Mr. Colville.

"Yes, sir," replied Ernest, with an instinctive perception of the authority he was addressing.

“Bring it here, then.”

Ernest scrambled quickly up the slope, and presented it.

“How long have you been on the line?” asked Mr. Colville. “I don’t remember having seen you before.”

“No, sir, I am not engaged on the line. I——”

“A mistake!” said Mr. Colville, with a smile. “Well, sir, we are much obliged to you for your kind assistance, and I must apologize for pressing you into the service. May I ask what line you are employed on?”—And his eye ran over him with a look of interest, which brought a glow to Ernest’s cheek.

“I have never been on any, sir,” replied the young man. “I am afraid this will be a poor recommendation to you, but I am in search of employment, and make bold to ask if you can give me anything to do?”

“No, no—there is no opening,” interposed Mr. Hammer. And he added to Mr. Colville—“We have already too many young men, sir.”

Ernest’s hopes had run high, and as they were thus dashed to the ground, he turned an appealing look on Mr. Colville.

The great man mused a moment. Genius, whatever its infirmities, is rarely deaf to human sympathy, particularly when it pleads for merit.

“You’ve no knowledge of engineering?” he said at length.

“No, sir.”

“Well, let me see—yes, I do want some one there, and it only requires common intelligence. I’m thinking of the Brawl viaduct, Mr. Hammer. Now, they are turning the arches, I must have somebody to see the cement is properly mixed, and the earth well rammed in

between the buttresses. Send this gentleman there."

"Very well, sir."

"Don't you think it will be a good plan, Mr. Pool?" asked Mr. Colville.

"I'm sure your better judgment must be correct, sir," replied the cautious Pool.

"Then, Mr. —— you didn't tell me your name?"

"Glynn, sir."

"Glynn—thank you. Mr. Glynn had better go to the viaduct at once, Mr. Hammer. Say to-morrow."

"Be at my office at Markford, at nine o'clock to-morrow morning, if you please," said Hammer to Ernest.

"Mr. Hammer will then give you your instructions, Mr. Glynn," observed the chief. "And now, good morning."

And he walked along towards the bridge, followed by his two aides.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE SNAKE IN THE GRASS.

THE office of Mr. Hammer was easily discovered, though it was twenty miles distant; but the whole country being in some way connected with the railroad, everybody knew the Yellow-hammer—some by his coat, and not a few by his doctrine. A stage-coach, not yet become historic, but having a moody idea that its days were numbered, carried Ernest to the little town of Markford, where Mr. Hammer resided, and which was the head-quarters for a certain portion of the

line, constructing under his immediate superintendence.

Punctually at nine o'clock, the hour appointed, Ernest presented himself at the office—a detached villa, distinguished by a flagstaff on the roof, to which a red flag, emblazoned with the unvarying G. H. R., the Company's *Senatus Populus Que Romanus*, gave a rather striking appearance. Inquiring for Mr. Hammer, he was shown into a room, fitted with a long deal drawing-table against the window, and containing two or three high stools, where he remained several hours, till at last, supposing he had been forgotten, he ventured to look into the passage in quest of a servant, that he might ascertain his chance of an audience. Opposite was another room, and through the open doorway he saw three young men, very stylishly dressed, seated together at a drawing-table, professedly look-

ing over architectural plans and sections, but, in fact, endeavouring to banish *ennui* by jerks of conversation. These were Mr. Hammer's pupils, with whom he had received considerable sums of money, as a premium for instructing them in what, as it proved, he knew very little about, and even if he had been ever so proficient, had no time to communicate. They all honoured Ernest with an impudent stare ; but, undaunted by this reception, he was about to make known the object he had in view, when Mr. Hammer himself appeared in the passage, and spared him the humiliation.

"Oh ! you ?" he said, without noticing Ernest's recognition. And hurrying into the room, he lounged back against the drawing-table, leaving his visitor at the door.

"Well, you know what you've got to do," he continued. "The Brawl viaduct,

where you are to be stationed, is one of the most important works on the line. The arches are of great span, and it is necessary that the cement used in their construction should be particularly good. You will be responsible that it is made of one measure of cement to every measure of sand. You will also see that the contractors for the adjoining embankment have the earth well rammed in between the buttresses, as well as on the outside, keeping the height within and without constantly at the same level, so that the pressure against the brickwork may be equal on both sides. Finally, you must be on the works from six in the morning till six in the evening, leaving only at such hours as the men go away for refreshment."

"I shall not fail to attend, sir," replied Ernest.

"You'd better not," said Mr. Hammer,

significantly. "As to—to wages," he continued, using the most humbling term he could think of, "you'll be placed on the same footing as the other assistants."

"That is more consideration than I expected," said Ernest, "but I hope, by diligence and attention, to make up, in some measure, for my want of knowledge—or, at least, to leave no room for complaint."

"If you do, you'll be sent about your business, that's all," said Mr. Hammer, who, while he wished to impress Ernest with an exalted notion of his consequence, secretly resented his nomination by Mr. Colville. "But you now know how you stand with the Company: do you know how you stand with eternity?"

Ernest looked up astonished.

"Are you aware you've got a soul?" pursued Mr. Hammer.

"Fully, sir,"

“Then, remember you have to provide for your soul as well as for your body—that the one requires food and clothing as well as the other. You may go now. The contractors for the works have been apprised of your appointment, and of your duties. You will, therefore, find everything ready for you; and while you are doing your daily work, think, I say again, of your *eternal* work. My son, Master Julius Hammer Hammer, aged six years, has written something in connexion with this subject, which you may read with much profit; and as I have given a copy to every one employed on the line, I believe it has done a great deal of good.”

So saying, he presented Ernest with a tract, bearing the title of “A Dialogue with an Anabaptist,” and recording a severe discussion between himself and his son, which resulted in the conversion of

the latter to the tenets of Anabaptism. The argument was doubtless drawn up by an author of larger growth than Master Julius Hammer Hammer, though not less a child; and Mr. Hammer, whose doctrine it vindicated, had been so indefatigable in disseminating the tract, that, if any reliance might be placed on the title-page, it had now reached its "twentieth thousand."

With this spoil in his hand, Ernest marched out of the office, glad to draw a free breath in the air.

The Brawl viaduct, he now found, was about two miles from the spot where he had met Mr. Colville, so that he would have to retrace his steps; but the same coach passed through Dartmill, a village within sight of the works, and anxious to reach his destination as soon as possible, he lost no time in securing a place. There are worse conveyances, even in the

present day, than a four-horse coach constructed on the clipper principle, and, in point of speed, Ernest's vehicle was certainly no tortoise. It was still light when he arrived at Dartmill, and, though no one was now on the works, he paused only to drop his bag at the inn, and then proceeded to the line, impatient to behold the scene of his future duties.

The sight which soon burst upon him was indeed a novel one. The little valley of the Brawl, lying in the midst of verdant slopes, crowned with woods, and traversed by its peaceful stream, looking like a vein of silver, was cut in two by a prodigious embankment, rising, in the bed of the valley, to a height of sixty feet. This mountain of earth was divided, as it approached the rivulet, by a range of brickwork, spanning the Brawl and its banks with colossal arches, of which, however, only the first ring of bricks was yet

turned. Here, then, was the viaduct, and, as Ernest drew nearer, he observed that the embankment on each side, though very close, was not yet united with the brickwork, except at the bottom, so that he saw at once what remained to be done, and how it was to be executed. The part assigned to him in these operations was a humble one; but it was something to be concerned even remotely in such a vast undertaking, and he felt that, after all, the safety of the whole depended, in great measure, on the vigilance, zeal, and attention with which he discharged his trust.

Morning found him at the works among the earliest comers. But, at the very outset, a difficulty presented itself on which he had not reckoned, and at the foot of the scaffolding, he became sensible, for the first time, that it required something more than courage to ascend the tapering

ladders with expedition and agility. The summit was at length reached, and he stood on the crown of an arch, installed in his new functions.

To the uninitiated, the sphere of his duty might seem to offer but few points of interest, but Ernest found it otherwise; and, indeed, it suggested, in its various details, a thousand scientific inquiries, to which the works in progress enabled him to obtain an explicit and practical answer. In short, it did not require much discernment to see that he was in a situation to learn the craft of the engineer, without the probation of apprenticeship.

In the midst of his avocations, he was surprised, in passing along the scaffold, to encounter Wormwood, who, it may be observed here, was suspected of playing the part of a spy for Mr. Hammer, and was said to be in the habit of reporting to that authority all the little omissions and

derelictions of his brother assistants, together with any disparaging observations respecting Mr. Hammer himself, which might be made in his hearing—not unfrequently under his subtle suggestions.

“How do you do?” he said to Ernest, in the most friendly way. “Mr. Hammer desired me to meet you here, and give you any information you might want.”

“Thank you, I don’t know that I want any at present,” replied Ernest. “Mr. Hammer’s instructions are so complete.”

“Ah, I dare say, sir: they usually are. A monstrous clever man, Mr. Hammer, sir.”

“I have no doubt of it.”

“He’s a very peculiar man—in fact, a character,” pursued Wormwood, feeling his way. “Some of our people don’t like him, and, as we all make a point of speaking without reserve, I have heard

him handled rather roughly. There may, I don't deny, be something curious in his manners."—And he fixed his basilisk gaze on Ernest, as if to dive into his heart.

"You think so?" said Ernest.

"Oh, dear no! I don't say it is my own opinion," said the snake, recoiling, "but it may be true as regards others, though I can't say I have observed it myself. But you *don't* think so?"

"I have seen so little of him, it is hardly fair to say."

"Ah! you are cautious, I see. Well, I like that. Every one here is so communicative, it isn't safe to open your mouth; or what you say, passing from one to another, may be turned into something quite different from what you mean. This makes one feel the want of a friend—a friend whom one can trust, and respect, and consult. A friend is an inestimable possession, sir."

“ A true friend must be.”

“ You have an exact perception of my meaning,” exclaimed Wormwood. “ That’s a most curious thing, and you can’t conceive how gratifying it is to me—so seldom do I meet any one who understands me. Do you know, Mr. Glynn, I have peculiar ideas on the subject of friendship? I consider it a sacred sentiment.”

“ That is viewing it in an exalted light, certainly.”

“ No doubt, and in my opinion it can’t be too exalted. You’ve seen the play of ‘Gisippus,’ I presume.”

“ No, but I know the story.”

“ Well, the only person who ever came up to my notion of a friend was Gisippus. There was a friend for you, if you like; and I am a Gisippus.”

“ You take a high standard, but I think he carried friendship a little too far.”

“ Not a bit. I would act myself in the

very same way to-morrow to serve a friend. I've studied the character of that man, sir, and can repeat the part from first to last. I want some one to whom I can be a Gisippus—to whom I can devote myself. Now it's a curious thing, but I've had a most extraordinary feeling draw me towards you, Mr. Glynn, from the first moment I saw you. Isn't it strange?"

"Very," said Ernest, drily.

"Ah! you don't believe in such things—the secret sympathies of congenial souls," returned Wormwood, with a short cough. "Well, it is the way of the world, Mr. Glynn—all the same, all the same! But we were speaking of Mr. Hammer. Did you remark what a deep interest he takes in the religious welfare of those around him. I dare say he inquired if you were aware you had a soul?"

"He certainly did."

“An interesting question—very, and a serious one, too.”—And Wormwood looked as if he were going to fasten on Ernest’s throat. “And that tract of Master Julius Hammer’s,” he continued, as Ernest remained silent, “is a most remarkable production to be written at the tender age of six.”—And a sardonic smile was just perceptible on his lip. — “Mr. Hammer presented you with a copy, no doubt?”

“He did.”

“Have you read it?”

“Not yet.”

“Well, Mr. Glynn, it’s——”

But at this moment Wormwood received a tremendous slap on the back, which almost sent him over the scaffold; and at the same time his ear was saluted by a strange sound, resembling the danger-signal of a locomotive, and announcing the presence of his coadjutors Parkyns

and Blouser. The latter, from whom this salutation emanated, instantly, without further notice of Wormwood, seized the hand of Ernest, giving it a hearty shake as he said—"How's your feelins?"

"Our worthy colleague Blouser, sir," explained Wormwood, rather annoyed at the interruption, but afraid to show umbrage to the pea-jacket. "And this is Mr. Parkyns—old Parr, we call him, from his having first introduced the celebrated life-mixture, compounded of ginger-beer and pale ale."

"Glad to make your acquaintance, Mr. Glynn," observed Parkyns. "My friend Blouser's a rough specimen, but you'll find him a thorough gentleman. We haven't all got the polish of Wormwood, sir."

Ernest was amused to see such a change in the demeanour of Parkyns towards Wormwood—a change the more apparent, perhaps, at this moment, as he was greatly

annoyed that his junior had been selected to meet Ernest on the works.

“And don’t stand so high with the Yellow-hammer—can’t put salt on his tail,” said Parkyns, growing desperate.

“Which nobody *can* deny,” observed Blouser.

“You’re both talking riddles my boys,” said Wormwood. “But we’re interrupting Mr. Glynn, and I dare say he will gladly dispense with our company.”—And he moved off, to avoid a retort.

“Walker,” remarked Blouser to Parkyns. “Ditto. The same to you.”

“I’m quite ready,” answered Parkyns, still rather excited. “We’ve started him, and that’s all I wanted. Good morning, Mr. Glynn. We meet again at Philippi—the King’s Head: chair taken at eight precisely.”

“Will I be after bringin’ on some more mixtur, sir?” asked Pat Riley, who was standing in the rear with his can.

“Do, Pat,” replied Parkyns, “and if you happen by chance, to spill any in your mouth, don’t fill up the can with water. I know you’re a temperance man, and I don’t dispute the valuable properties of water, but somehow, they don’t combine well with beer. The two fluids are essentially inimical.”

“Och’, sure, any fool ’ud know that, your honour. Do you think I’d be after spilin’ the wather with beer, Mr. Parkyns, sir?”

“No, Pat, but you spoil the beer with water.”

“Troth, your honour must have your joke, anyhow; and if I was dyin’ you’d make me laugh out at you, so you would! But it’s my b’lief, you’d find the same with the blessed father Mattew himself, if he was always carryin’ a can of mixtur.”

And touching his hat to Ernest, Pat followed Parkyns off the scaffold.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE BRAWL VIADUCT.

THE viaduct and embankment progressed steadily, though slowly, and meanwhile, Ernest, with work of all kinds going on around him, enjoyed a thousand opportunities of augmenting his practical knowledge and efficiency. In a short time he learnt levelling and the use of the theodolite, and was able to draw a plan of a bridge, and estimate the cost of its construction. Parkyns and Blouser readily instructed him in all they knew, and he found the same willingness in the agents and superintendents of the contractors; but

Wormwood, while he made no end of friendly professions, uniformly evaded giving any information. Soon, however, he found himself in the background, and was often glad to seek aid from the more alert judgment and dexterity of Ernest.

But it was not in engineering alone that Ernest enlarged his fund of knowledge. The colossal embankment which was now fast closing on the viaduct, an Alps of art, had been dug up from as vast a cutting, and in this excavation he found leisure to pursue the interesting researches of geology. In the mines of Wales he had looked into the limestone and the coal : here, in the broader light of day, he beheld the diluvium, the clays, and the chalk. Often he stood in rapt contemplation of this marvellous and most terrible history. Full of suggestion indeed was its half-faded writing, and, from the wreck of worlds, he turned with a calmer

spirit to the littleness of his own occupations, elevated and refined in his views, and impressed alike by the solemn inspiration of religion, and the beautiful lessons of philosophy.

Gradually his task at the viaduct drew to a completion. The arches, which from their great span had excited no little apprehension, were now well set, and the centres being lowered, the massive structure stood exposed to view, a rare combination of elegance and solidity. In honour of the event, the contractors gave their workmen a holiday, and for one day, operations were suspended on that portion of the line.

It was a bright morning, as if Nature, too, made holiday, and Ernest enjoyed, as only those who are constantly occupied can, the luxury of an idle day. But as evening came on, with thoughts still clinging to his duty, he strolled along by

the side of the works, in proud contemplation of their appearance. The spectacle was one that might well excite interest, and suggest reflection. A noble achievement of science, a wondrous result of labour, it was, at the same time, a grand revelation of human progress. Soon that lofty causeway, constructed under his eye, would traverse the country like an artery, disseminating a new stream of wealth, like fresh blood, through the length and breadth of the land. The miraculous element of steam would draw along its road of iron a whole host of travellers, carrying the beneficent influences of civilization to the remotest nooks—a comet with its train of light! Far more swiftly would the electric wire, the girdle of the new highway, diffuse, on lightning wings, the same benign effects, annihilating time and space, and uniting all men in a common bond of brotherhood.

If we looked back with wonder at the Appian roads of the Romans, which remain among the proudest monuments of their enterprise and genius, how would posterity, in the lapse of ages, regard this triumph of later times? Here was a road towering over valleys, and tunnelled through mountains, which would only perish, as far as human judgment could foresee, with the soil on which it rested. The thought was suggestive, and instinctively Ernest's eye turned on the ground, wandering over it with a half-abstracted glance. Suddenly light gleamed in his look, kindling his face with startled interest. He stooped down, and remained a moment with his eyes fixed on the turf: THE GROUND WAS SLIPPING! He traced a crack, as yet but imperfectly marked, alongside the whole length of the embankment. The mighty fabric of earth, as it acquired cohesion, was pressing out the natural soil, driving away its

own foundation: the subsidence would soon be felt at its junction with the viaduct; as the embankment slipped down, it would tear away the buttresses; and in a few hours the stately achievement of the builder, to which he had just attributed a more than Egyptian stability, would be a heap of ruins.

For a moment, Ernest was confounded at this unexpected casualty. But it was not a time to hesitate, and he quickly decided on the course he should pursue. Flying to the inn, he dispatched expresses to Mr. Colville and Mr. Hammer, briefly stating what he had discovered, at the same time sending for Parkyns, Wormwood, and Blouser, that he might have the advantage of their assistance and advice in such a great emergency. He also addressed a note to the agent of the contractor, requiring his immediate presence at the works.

The agent, Mr. Shorter, a plain, pre-

cise-looking man, the very embodiment of a practical idea, even his whiskers being adjusted in a matter-of-fact way, promptly attended, and learnt the critical situation of the viaduct.

“What you say, is no doubt correct, sir,” he observed, in reply to Ernest’s statement, “but that is no business of mine. Our people engaged to build the viaduct, and they have built it: if the embankment breaks away the brickwork, we have nothing to do with that.”

“I don’t say you have,” rejoined Ernest. “But you’re bound to lend me your aid to preserve it.”

“I’m willing to do so.”

“You recognise my authority?”

“Certainly. You are the representative of the Company here.”

“And you concur with me, that nothing can be done, unless we take measures to arrest the slip at once?”

“I am quite of that opinion.”

“Then I order you to clear out the earth from the buttresses of the viaduct, and to lighten the top of the embankment, by throwing the earth down on the subsiding side, so as to extend the slope beyond where the ground has slipped. You must instantly put on your whole force, and work all night.”

“You will please to give me these instructions in writing, sir, stating that you take upon yourself the whole responsibility of the proceeding.”

“That is but reasonable, and I am willing to do so.”

“Then, your orders shall be obeyed.”

Night was coming on, but, through the untiring efforts of Ernest, scarcely an hour had elapsed, ere a large body of men were on the works, carrying out his energetic measures. Fires blazed along the bank, illuminating the surrounding country, and

throwing a lurid glare, like the reflection of a volcano, on the dark and lowering sky. Teams of horses moved to and fro, dragging along the rugged tramway heavy loads of earth from the interior of the buttresses, which were shot rapidly over the bank, while hundreds of navvies, under their several gangers, worked away with their picks, and heaped up a fresh supply. Ernest stood in the midst of the brickwork, the point of greatest importance, stimulating the workmen, as they cleared away the earth, by his presence and example. Here, at length, when the night had far waned, he was joined by the other three assistants.

“Why, Glynn, my boy, what’s all this?” cried Parkyns

“Who ordered it?” demanded Wormwood, his eyes preparing for a spring.

Ernest hastily explained.

“What a go!” observed Blouser.

"I hope you all approve of what I have done?" said Ernest.

"Egad, I don't know what to say to it, my dear fellow," answered Parkyns, "and that's the truth. I hope I. C. will bear you out."

I don't think he will," said Wormwood. "I wouldn't stand in Glynn's shoes for a trifle."

"What do *you* think of it, Blouser?" asked Ernest.

"Stunnin'!" said Blouser.

"You approve?"

"Whole hog," said Blouser, emphatically.

"It's a great satisfaction for me to know you do," returned Ernest, "as I value your opinion, and it confirms me in my own."

"Put on the steam," said Blouser.

"I hope it's all right," observed Parkyns, a little ashamed; "but I once

got into a tremendous scrape with a similar thing on the Grand Trunk Line, where I saved a superb bridge, and got the bullet the next day. I then determined never to originate anything again."

"Why, this is something new," observed Wormwood, incredulously. "How is it you've never told us of it before?"

"*Mister* Wormwood," answered Parkyns, turning very red, "I beg you'll keep your observations to yourself. There are many things I've done which I have never told you, and never shall. As a gentleman, I can only be understood by gentlemen. But you're Glynn's friend: why don't you stand by him now, when your friendship may be useful?"

"Because I don't approve of what he's done," answered Wormwood, pertly.

"And is that acting like Gisippus?" asked Parkyns.

"Good!" said Blouser. "Sold again!"

“It’s no matter,” observed Ernest. “I take the whole onus of the thing on myself: I’m only glad to have Blouser’s opinion that I’ve acted right.”

“And have you sent for I. C. and the Yellow-hammer?” asked Parkyns.

“Yes.”

“Then, let’s have some refreshments.—Riley!”

“Here you are, your honour,” answered Riley, producing his can.

“What, have you got some?”

“Sure, I knew your honours couldn’t do without mixtur,” replied Pat: “and so I brought some up wid me, good luck to it! By the same token——”

“Never mind the token,” observed Parkyns “but run down to the King’s Head, and tell them to send up supper for four, and put it down to the Company.”

“Ay, ay, your honour,” answered Pat.

And he muttered as he moved off—"Sure, I may as well say for *five* while I'm about it, so I might! Arrah! So I will too!"

The supper, which was not only enough for five, but for a dozen (the G. H. R. being in high odour at the inn), soon made its appearance, and Parkyns, Wormwood, and Blouser at once set to, and regaled themselves. Ernest, too conscientious to feast at the expense of the Company, and thinking only of the work in hand, declined to participate in the repast, remaining immovable at his post.

Suddenly there was a lull among the workmen, and the party at supper jumped up, not without a hint, dexterously telegraphed by Riley, as to who was approaching. It was Mr. Hammer.

In a moment he was under the arch of the buttress, confronting Ernest.

"Is Mr. Colville here?" he inquired, quickly.

“No, sir.”

“Then what are you doing? Who has ordered all this?”

“I have, sir.”

“You?”

“Yes, sir. I was afraid of the viaduct being torn down before I could receive your instructions, and I ventured to act on my own responsibility.”

“*Your* responsibility. Who gave *you* any responsibility?”

“I thought—”

“You’d no business to think, sir,” cried the Yellow-hammer, with the look of a kite.

“Mr. Glynn, I told you,” observed Wormwood, in a very gentle voice, “I was afraid that——”

“I really am surprised, Mr. Wormwood,” cried Mr. Hammer, “that this proceeding should be sanctioned by you.”

“By me, sir!” said Wormwood, fixing his eyes. “Not by me, I assure you. I

told Mr. Glynn, I did not, and could not sanction it."

"Then who has?"

"Name of Blouser," said Blouser, stepping forward.

"I think it right to state, sir, that I alone am responsible," observed Ernest. "Mr. Blouser, though he believed I had acted for the best, has in no way interfered, and the contractor has but obeyed my orders. I saw the crack in the ground, and thought the only way to arrest the slip was to clear out the buttresses, and lighten the embankment."

"And you thought right," said a loud, clear voice. "You have saved the viaduct, and I highly approve of your conduct."

There was a moment's pause, when a loud cheer rang along the bank, as the workmen recognised Mr. Colville.

CHAPTER XV.

ENGLISH AND IRISH.

THE measures originated by Ernest effectually arrested the landslip, and gave the embankment permanence and stability. This result, however, was not the work of a day, or a few hours, but though the effect, to a certain extent, was immediate, occupied a considerable time, and was frequently interrupted by minor difficulties, not easily comprehended by unprofessional minds. At length, all obstacles were overcome, and the undertaking completed.

Ernest was now removed to another part of the line, where the work of construction being finished, Mr. Colville had commenced the operation of laying down the rails. Such a task, to one of any experience, might seem simple enough, but in this case it was really far otherwise, the rails being laid on a new principle, on longitudinal sleepers, and requiring, from various causes, unremitting attention on the part of the engineer. Wormwood was joined with Ernest in the duty, and they relieved each other night and day, sometimes remaining up together all night, when, from any unforeseen circumstance, the work called for an extraordinary degree of vigilance. Blouser and Parkyns superintended an adjoining tract, and an old tiled hovel, by the side of a canal, the deserted lair of a brickmaker, served as an office for all.

Ernest was now brought into much closer contact with the navvies, and saw more of them, as a class, in a few days, than he had ever seen before. Familiar as he was with the low moral condition of the miners and ironworkers of the West, the desperate character and demoralized habits of these reckless men took him completely by surprise, and he could not but wonder that, in the nineteenth century, in the midst of a community foremost in every good work, such ignorance and barbarism could exist. Melancholy, indeed, it was to see a peasantry so brutalized and degraded, retaining nothing of humanity but its form. Among them the name of God was never pronounced but in execration and blasphemy ; the mind recognised no scruple of morality or religion ; and, in domestic life, the sacred tie of marriage was unknown. Every base passion, every pernicious habit, every

low, grovelling, and debasing vice, by which human nature can be tainted and defiled, here stood forth in its most hideous aspect, unreprieved and unchecked; and the very labour which, under proper direction, might have been made a means of elevation, became an additional cause of debasement, being pursued without intermission night and day, even on Sunday, under the stimulus of beer and gin, till the men were constantly either stupified or intoxicated, and threw off alike restraint and shame.

Among the various gangs were many Irishmen, and, to the other causes of quarrel which were continually arising, that of nationality, the most bitter of all, was soon added. The Irish, working under price, were naturally regarded as intruders, and a bad feeling grew up, which, pervading both parties, was always ready to break out on the slightest pro-

vocation. Sometimes the Irish, sometimes the English, were the aggressors, and the result was always a fight, embittering the combatants still further against each other, and rendering the breach wider and wider. On one of these occasions Ernest had been appealed to, and had decided in favour of the Irish, who, as it happened, were at the moment in the right, though an hour afterwards, perhaps, he would have given a verdict against them; but no one paused to inquire whether his decision was just and impartial, they only cared to know which side he was on. From that day, he was adopted as a champion by the Irish, and, unknown to himself, became the object of all those feelings of devotion so readily excited in the Irish heart, while, on the other hand, he was cordially detested by the English, who looked upon him, through the distorted

medium of their prejudices, as the patron of the Irish, and a betrayer and persecutor of his own countrymen.

One night Ernest and Wormwood were both on duty, and had retired for a few moments to the office, to consult on some point of difficulty, when a tremendous uproar was heard without, and Pat Riley, for once without his can, rushed in breathless, exhibiting unmistakable marks of punishment.

“Och, run for your life, Mr. Glynn, dear!” he cried. “They’re comin’ down on us like mad, swearin’ vengeance, and they’ll take it sure enough. Hear to ’em!”

“What is it?” cried Wormwood, turning pale, and half making for the door.

“Sure it’s Mr. Glynn they’re after,” cried Pat. “And, whisht! how he sits there, as if it was a wake we was at. And maybe it ’ull end in a wake, yet.

Och ! run for your life, your honour, will you?"

"Now take your breath, and then tell me quietly what is the matter, Pat," replied Ernest.

"Tell you quietly, do you say? Arrah, then, I'm in a pretty state to be quiet, aint I, and with them roarin' villians comin' on, too. And here they are upon us, faix ! and now we're as good as kilt entirely."

There was indeed a rush of feet in the passage, and, before Ernest could interpose, half-a-dozen men had entered, their heads streaming with blood ; and shut and secured the door. A glance showed that they were Irish, and a fearful yell without, bursting at once from hundreds of voices, indicated the close proximity of their enemies. The Irish, however, had the advantage of great experience in such affrays, and in a moment they so

barricaded the door and lower window of the hovel, with desks, chairs, and stools, that the assailants, with all their combined strength, were unable to force an entrance.

Ernest now learnt from Riley the origin of the disturbance, from which it appeared that the English had come to the resolution of driving the Irish off the line, at the same time subjecting them, in revenge for past affronts, to the grossest ill-usage, and denouncing summary vengeance against all who had supported them. In this category Ernest was included, and in fact many of the assailants were calling upon him by name, to stand forth and show himself, that they might tear his heart out—a shocking threat, coming from such men, who were not only brutal enough to tear out his heart, but almost savage enough to eat it.

The first attack was followed up by a volley of brickbats, which the door and window-shutters, in themselves very crazy

defences, would have been unable to resist, if they had not been so effectually barricaded.

“We can’t stand this long,” said Ernest, to Wormwood. “What is to be done?”

“I—I don’t know,” answered Wormwood, who was suffering from a tremor in his fangs. “I—I wish I could get out, and—and run.”

“But you can’t. You’d be caught, and most likely be severely handled. But we must get some one out, and send for assistance, or we shall be murdered.”

“You’re not—not goin’ yourself,” stammered Wormwood, who, ever suspecting treachery, thought Ernest wished to secure his own retreat, and leave him in the lurch. “I—I won’t—won’t hear of it, Mis—Mister Glynn.”

“Don’t be alarmed,” returned Ernest. “I’ve no intention of running away, even if it were possible, which it does not appear to be. The thing is, can we apprise our friends of our situation? I

think we might.”—He turned to Riley, and asked if he could swim.

“Like a duck, yer honour, no less,” returned Riley.

“Then you must get out at the back of the house, and drop into the canal,” rejoined Ernest—“when you can make over the brickfield to Drayland, and knock up Mr. Shorter. Let him know the extremity we are in, and he’ll do something to assist us.”

“Troth, I wisht he was here now, yer honour,” returned Riley, as another furious assault was made on the door, “but it’s myself that’ll give him no paice till he’s on the road.”

There was no door at the back of the hovel, which, as already observed, stood on the brink of the canal; but about midway between the ground and roof, there was a small fan-light, for the purpose of lighting the stairs; and it was through

this outlet that Riley was to make his egress. The poor fellow devoted himself to the enterprise with a resolution approaching the heroic, and submitted in silence to the operation of being worked through the small aperture, though it occasioned him no little suffering. But a party were watching the back of the house, from the bank higher up, and his descent from the casement, after clinging for a moment to the sill, was a signal for a shower of brick-bats, one of which struck him a violent blow as he fell with a splash in the water. A fearful yell announced his flight to the mob in front, who, supposing that all the inmates were attempting to escape, redoubled their efforts to gain an entrance, while two or three of the rearward party threw off their smocks, and followed Riley into the water. The Irishman scarcely ventured to appear on the surface, but struck out below, and a few efforts

brought him to his feet, when he scrambled up the bank, and darted away. He had not gone many steps, however, when he tumbled headlong into a stagnant pool, and before he could extricate himself, his pursuers had gained the bank, and were close upon him. A loud halloo betrayed their presence, and consciousness of his proximity; but Riley doubled round a brick-kiln, and got a start. He then made a dash for the road, hotly pursued by the navvies.

While this was proceeding outside, Ernest, foreseeing that the door must soon be forced, was strengthening his defences within, by erecting a second barricade at the foot of the stairs. Having previously used all the furniture, he would now have been at a loss for material, but his Irish garrison, with the help of their pickaxes, tore up the flooring of the upper room, and pulled out the

grates, forming with these accessories an impassable barrier. They then raised the bricks which composed the floor of the passage, heaping them up behind the barricade, to serve as missiles, and finally, under Ernest's direction, took up their position on the stairs, and awaited the enemy.

The door withstood its assailants longer than they expected, but, at last, it broke in with a crash, throwing down the rampart of chairs and stools, which fell in fragments in the passage. A swarm of navvies poured in, brandishing pickaxes and shovels, and made a rush at the inner barricade; but were received, as they advanced, with such a shower of bricks, that they fell back over each other, blocking up the way, and causing a frightful scene of confusion—heightened, if possible, by the darkness, Ernest having extinguished the light. Still the mob behind, more

and more infuriated, pushed on, trampling over their own accomplices, and uttering the most appalling yells, mingled with threats too horrible to be repeated. Missiles could no longer keep them back, and a struggle commenced over the barricade, in which Ernest, now fighting for his life, took a foremost part. A gigantic navvie at length seized him by the throat, and was dragging him over the barricade, when a blow from an Irishman's shovel drove him back, and set Ernest free. But in the encounter one of the planks broke down, greatly weakening the defence, and the assailants, pushing forward in a body, gained a footing on the stairs. All now seemed lost, but at this critical moment there was a loud cry of "War-ork," used on the line to denote the approach of a constable, and presently it arose from without as from one voice. Cheered by the hope of

succour, the defendants made a desperate effort to maintain their ground, and as the cry of "War-ork" again rose, the assailants fell back, rushing from the house as other shouts were heard, followed by the trampling of horse. In fact, as they poured forth, a troop of cavalry galloped up to the hovel, scattering the mob in all directions.

Riley, it turned out, had made his way to Mr. Shorter's, but the riot had already spread along the line, and knowing that no ordinary force could repress it, the overseer had gone off at once to —, and brought down the military, whose timely appearance secured the safety of Ernest and his companions. For some moments they were in great alarm about Wormwood, who had mysteriously disappeared; but, at last he was found in the upper room, concealed in a cupboard, and half dead with fear.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE REWARD OF MERIT.

THE ferment caused by the riot, extending for some distance along the line, did not subside for several days. Many on both sides were severely injured, and not a few were apprehended by the police, and afterwards, as the most active of the rioters, brought to trial at the assizes. Ernest, having fought in the dark, was unable to identify any of the parties, but the case was made out against several, and they were sentenced to transportation, while

others, guilty in a less degree, were adjudged various terms of imprisonment.

On the morning following the riot, Parkyns and Blouser, hearing what had occurred, paid an early visit to the office, impatient to learn the real facts; and found Ernest already at work.

“Here’s a game!” cried Blouser, as he came upon the wreck in the passage.

“Faix, it’s true for you, yer honour,” observed Pat Riley, who had just appeared with his can. “It bate Donnybrook holler, you may take yer oath.”

“Where did you make your great stand?” asked Parkyns of Ernest.

“Just here,” replied Ernest, “at the foot of the stairs.”

“Sitch a gettin’ up stairs I never did see,” remarked Blouser.

“By dad, yer honour’s a good judge,” remarked Riley. “It was a beautiful skrimmage, no doubt; and you’d give

the two eyes of your head to see sitch another !”

“ Over here,” said Blouser, pointing significantly over his left shoulder.

“ It was a good position, and well chosen,” remarked Parkyns, with the air of a general. “ A barricade here, and the rise of the stairs behind, with the narrow passage in front, gave you a great advantage, and you might hold out a long time. How many of you were there ?”

“ Half a dozen in all,” answered Ernest.

“ Of those half-dozen I ask but three to make a new Thermopylæ,” said Parkyns.

“ Good !” cried Blouser. “ Bravo Rouse !”

“ I’ve no doubt Parkyns would have distinguished himself,” said Ernest ; “ but still I can’t help thinking we did pretty well, and I’m quite satisfied to

have got off as we did. But what's become of Wormwood?"

"Hooked it," replied Blouser.

"Not he," said Parkyns. "I called round at his place, and found he'd set off at daylight for Markford, no doubt to report his exploits to the Yellow-hammer, and you'll find, when the cat comes out, that it was Wormwood who did everything, and that our worthy friend Glynn was a mere cipher in the affair."

And so it proved; for, about half an hour afterwards, Mr. Hammer, thus accurately informed, appeared on the line, walking arm-in-arm with Wormwood, in the most friendly and confidential manner—a condescension which seemed almost too much for his *protégé*, who, in the words of Mr. Blouser, looked "staggered" on the occasion. They were attended by two of the mounted patrol, as a guard of honour, neither gentleman being

yet thoroughly satisfied that all was safe.

Mr. Hammer scowled at Ernest as he entered the office.

“A good night’s work you have made, sir, meddling with the men,” he said. “What business have you with their quarrels?”

“I really don’t understand you, sir,” replied Ernest, indignant at this affront.

“Surely Mr. Wormwood, if he has told you anything of what has occurred, must have let you know that we acted here last night in self-defence, and had nothing whatever to do with the quarrels of the men.”

“I can answer for myself, that I had not, most certainly,” said Wormwood, with a glare at his patron.

“Don’t drag in Mr. Wormwood, I beg, sir,” cried Mr. Hammer. “For his part in this occurrence, both the Company and

Mr. Colville are greatly indebted to him, and, in their name, I take this opportunity to tender him publicly their thanks. I am not imputing blame to him, but to you. I am told you have been interfering in the disputes of the work-people, and from this all the disturbance has originated."

"Then, I can only say, sir, your informant has wilfully misled you," replied Ernest.

"What do you say?"

"What I am prepared to prove. I have never interfered with the work-people, in any way, except when appealed to, and then only so far as was necessary to prevent the stoppage of the works."

"That's enough, sir. I don't want to hear any more."

"Pardon me, Mr. Hammer. You have brought a charge against me—a charge of the most serious description, and I

must be heard in refutation of it. If not, I shall appeal to Mr. Colville."

"Enough, I tell you," said Mr. Hammer, turning purple with rage.

"Are you satisfied of my innocence, sir?" pursued Ernest, "because here is Mr. Shorter"—the overseer entered at this instant—"who knows all the circumstances, and you must permit me to request an investigation. You are acquainted with the whole history of this disturbance among the workmen, Mr. Shorter?"

"Yes."

"What has been my conduct in the matter?"

"Extremely proper."

"Have I ever shown a disposition to interfere unnecessarily?"

"Quite the reverse. You have abstained from interfering as long as possible."

“Have I ever done anything to warrant an imputation of favouritism or partiality?”

“On the contrary, your conduct has always been characterised by forbearance, moderation, and a spirit of justice.”

“For he’s a jolly good fellow,” broke out Blouser. “*Hem!*—beg pardon.”—And he blew his nose violently, in the utmost confusion.

“I hope, sir, you are now convinced I have been misrepresented to you,” said Ernest to Mr. Hammer.

“Very well, sir—very well,” returned Mr. Hammer. “Let it be a warning to you not to interfere again—that’s all.”—And before Ernest could reply, he marched out of the office, followed by Wormwood.

“This is too bad,” exclaimed Ernest. “He pretends to give me a reprimand, though I have disproved the charge. But

I will ask him to produce my accuser.”—
And he made a movement towards the door.

“Stop where you are,” said Parkyns, arresting him. “You’ve said quite enough to vindicate your character as a gentleman, and as a gentleman, I applaud you for it. But a word more would do harm.”

“Mild,” observed Blouser, “mild’s the word. Let off the steam, my boy.”

But the impetuous young man, irritated at treatment so undeserved, and smarting under Mr. Hammer’s reproof, broke from them, and rushed out.

Mr. Hammer had just got into his gig, which, on alighting to walk up the line, he had directed to be brought round to the office, by the road, and Ernest only encountered Wormwood.

“I am indebted to you, I presume, for this unprovoked attack,” he said, with a look of scorn. “If you have anything to

allege against me, state it openly and fairly, and I will meet it."

"What can have put this into your head?" replied Wormwood. "I can have nothing to say of you, Mr. Glynn, but what is to your advantage."

"You know you have misrepresented me to Mr. Hammer, and that I have in consequence been censured, when my conduct deserved approbation."

"You accuse me of this! Where is your proof?"

"Proof!"

"Yes," said Wormwood, his eyes protruding. "I ask—I demand your proof. On what evidence do you charge me with so base an action?"

Ernest was confounded by the question. He had, indeed, acted only on suspicion—a suspicion dictated equally by an instinct in his own breast (too often a blind guide), and by several concurring

circumstances ; but a moment's reflection showed him that, however he might suspect, he had no right to condemn on such slender and inconclusive grounds.

“I have always acted towards you as a friend,” resumed Wormwood. “With me, friendship is a sacred sentiment, and the ruling principle of my life. But there are some people—people whom I have shrined in my heart, and defended behind their backs, who are incapable of friendship, and always suspecting and doubting. I ought to know there is no such thing as friendship in the world—it’s too sacred : its always on one side. Gisippus sacrificed himself to his friend ; and Cæsar thought he had a friend in Brutus, but Brutus stabbed him. That was the unkindest cut of all.”

“If you were my friend,” said Ernest, “why didn’t you attest what I said when I appealed to you?”

“So I did.”

"I understood you to speak only for yourself."

"Then, it was a mistake, for I meant to speak clearly and decisively."

"I'm glad to hear you say so. I've been too hasty, perhaps, in accusing you, and am sorry for it. I hope we shall really be friends in future."

They shook hands, Wormwood declaring he had no object in life but friendship, and that, regarded as a moral influence, friendship was the most pure and noble that could animate the bosom of man.

"I drink to that sentiment," cried Parkyns, appearing at the office door "Riley, the mixture! Mr. Wormwood's sentiment, Blouser!—friendship."—Parkyns had become very satirical on the subject of Wormwood's attachments,—“not forgetting absent friends, Mr. Hammer to wit.”

"Hammer and tongs," said Blouser. "Go ahead!"

Peace being established, matters proceeded in their usual course. The work of laying the rails progressed rapidly, and, as it advanced, was regarded with the greatest interest in the scientific world. Soon a run of about three miles was complete, and presented, in its structure and general features, an appearance so different from other railways, that it might well excite curiosity and attract universal attention.

On this tract it was determined to experimentalize, and accordingly an engine was brought down from London, by the road, with half-a-dozen carriages, for the purpose of running a train on the new-fashioned rails.

And here it may be necessary to explain the principle on which the rails were put down, which, fortunately for the reader, can be done in a few words. On most lines, the rails are laid at intervals of a

few feet, on transverse sleepers, to which they are secured by iron grooves, called chairs, causing at times a jolting, and often a vibratory motion, very far from agreeable. To get rid of such a drawback, and secure a perfectly easy motion, the rails on the Hirlemdown line were laid without chairs, on longitudinal sleepers, running the whole length of the rail, and supported, at short distances, by cross beams, fastened on piles. To render this massive framework still more stable, as well as to insure steadiness under the pressure of a train, the sleepers were packed, as it was called, with sifted gravel—that is, every stone was thrown aside, and the sand of the gravel beaten underneath the sleeper in a mass, affording, it was supposed, a uniformly level base, which would resist any amount of pressure, and consequently prevent the least vibration.

Great was the excitement when the

engine, so long expected, made its appearance at Drayland, mounted on a colossal truck, drawn by a whole stud of horses. Chains of iron and massive wedges, strengthened by bolts, were necessary to secure its huge frame to the vehicle, as if it were a monster instinct with life, ready to bear down at once on everything in the road. And it required but a draught of water in its tubes, inflating its iron lungs with a little vapour, to snap its chains as Samson did the threads of flax—leap from its lofty car, and dart on its course uncontrolled, though a stone wall stood in the way.

The whole country turned out, as one man, to view the first trip on the line. Scientific men from every part of the kingdom, including the most eminent engineers of the day, came down in troops, and filled all the carriages. The controversy which had been raging from the

first projection of the line was now about to be decided, and a great scientific principle negatived or affirmed. Isaac Colville, after seeing that everything was in order, himself mounted the engine—it might be with a shade of anxiety perceptible in his face, but still with the decision of a hero, and all the confidence of genius. The hour was at hand when his days of ceaseless toil, his sleepless nights, his untiring energy, vigilance, and exertion, would be rewarded, and the object of his ambition achieved. After reviling him in every possible way, so bitterly and so long, his enemies had come to be present at his defeat, and would have to bear witness to his triumph. Yet, in truth, he did not think of their discomfiture, but of his own success.

With a shriek of joy the engine felt the vivifying steam circulating in its veins. It drew along the stately train,

peopled with human beings, as if it were a feather, gliding over the rails with the swiftness of thought. Nothing could be easier than the motion—nothing more smooth, steady, or agreeable. Mr. Colville's detractors began to look serious; his friends to exult. In a moment there was but one opinion as to the result of the experiment: its success was complete.

But the return trip, though the line of rails was the same, excited a misgiving: once or twice there had been a sensible vibration. The sceptics took heart again, and suggested another trial. This, to their surprise, no less than Mr. Colville's, was more decisive, showing a marked unsteadiness in the motion. There was a general exclamation of wonder, and, as the train drew up, every one sprang from the carriages to see how such a change could have arisen. The cause was

but too clear ; the weight of the train, as it flew over the rails, had driven out the packing, and the sleepers being unsupported, except at the cross beams, undulated under pressure, and imparted a vibratory motion to the train.

But the Colvillites contended that this was one of those little incidents which always occur at first experiments, and which, therefore, could not be regarded as a result. The defect would be remedied by a little fresh packing, and, accordingly, fresh packing was immediately resorted to. Further experiments, however, produced the same effect, and for several days they were renewed with consequences precisely similar, till, at length, the conviction began to spread, among the chiefs of both parties, that Isaac Colville's great scheme was a FAILURE.

An ardent admirer of Mr. Colville,

Ernest, nevertheless, early perceived, from a careful examination of the sleepers, that it was not the packing, but the *quality* of the packing that led to this result. He observed that the fine gravel, though beaten in a mass beneath the sleeper, yet possessing in itself no binding property, pulverized under pressure, and flew out like dust. It then became clear to him that what the packing required was the power of cohesion, and as this could not be imparted where there was no natural capability, he came to the conclusion that some new material, which was not open to such an objection, must be used, and the sifted gravel discarded. What if he tried the gravel UNSIFTED ! No sooner did the idea occur to him, than he proceeded, with characteristic promptitude, to put it in execution, and, with his own hands, packed the coarse gravel under two sleepers, awaiting the passage

of the train to test its powers of resistance.

How high his heart beat when—stooping down as the train passed, to watch, with eager eyes, the effect of the enormous pressure—he saw the two sleepers remain immovable! Again and again the train passed and repassed, in every other spot driving out the packing like chaff; but here, for the few paces resting on the new material, the rails were firm as a rock—all the more firm, indeed, the more they were pressed.

A strange revulsion of feeling came over Ernest, and he turned from the spot, at the very moment that his hopes were realized, with a sickening sensation of diffidence. He had made an important discovery, but to what purpose? How could he turn it to account? how communicate it to Mr. Colville? The world would scoff, indeed, at such a tyro as he

was, with his experience of twelve months, presuming to offer a suggestion to the great engineer. No; better bury his discovery in oblivion than expose himself, by such a step, at once to derision and disgrace.

He thought over the subject all night, and all the next day; but at length ambition triumphed over discretion, and he determined to write to Mr. Colville, informing him of the experiment he had made, and its result.

It will readily be understood, by those who have acquired any perception of his character, how carefully every word of his letter was weighed and considered, and how sensible its writer was of the difficulty of alluding to Mr. Colville's failure, and his own success. With all his pains, he would, perhaps, a year later, when his pen had acquired greater felicity of expression, have written an epistle much less open to misconstruc-

tion, and more to the point. But probably he would not then have written it at all.

Not till after long hesitation was the momentous composition finally consigned to the Post-office—that bourne whence no letter returns. And now that the Rubicon was passed, Ernest's misgivings became more intolerable. He flew to the Post-office to withdraw the letter, but it was too late. Mercury had gone.

The experiments on the line had been suspended for a day or two, and next morning, Ernest was walking down the works, in company with Parkyns, longing to tell him what he had done, but not knowing how to open the subject, when the latter, who had been carefully examining the road, suddenly stopped at the spot where Ernest had been operating.

“Hilloa, how's this?” he said. “Look here !”

“Well?” said Ernest.

“ Well, don’t you see ? ” resumed Parkyns. “ The packing here hasn’t given way.”—He jumped up and down on the two sleepers—first on one, and then on the other. “ By Jove, they’re as firm as the ground itself. I can’t make it out.”

“ Shall I tell you how it is ? ” said Ernest.

“ Why, you haven’t been up to anything yourself, have you ? ”

“ Yes. As an experiment, I packed these two sleepers with unsifted gravel, and you see how they’ve stood.”

Parkyns turned very red at this announcement—so difficult is it, even when we are not destitute of good-nature, to hear without vexation of the success of another.

“ You’ve hit the nail on the head there, and no mistake,” he said. “ It’s very odd, I’ve thought of the same thing myself,

several times, and intended to try it in a day or two.”—Parkyns always had a foreshadowing of every one’s discoveries, but invariably after the event—“What are you going to do about it?”

“I’ve written to Mr. Colville, mentioning what led me to the discovery, and how it has answered.”

“The deuce you have! ’Pon my word, Glynn, the size of your cheek is alarming.”

“You think I’ve acted wrong?”

“I don’t say wrong, but foolishly—desperately. Don’t you know that I. C. thinks his own conceptions immaculate? Don’t you see he never gives in—that though every one else is convinced, he goes on, day after day, testing and experimenting, when his best friends acknowledge it’s all up? And you’ve had the audacity to tell him so!”

“You take a wrong view of his cha-

racter. All this is only the decision and perseverance of genius, which will not tamely be conquered. But I shall be sorry if he misconstrues my motives."

"Misconstrues! I tell you I see 'sack' written on your face as plain as if the word was already spoken."

"You had much the same apprehensions about the Brawl viaduct."

"Ah! there the case was different. A casualty occurred, and you acted with promptitude and decision, and acted right. It was impossible not to approve of what you had done. But even in that case, what good did you ever get by it?"

"None, I confess."

"And depend upon it, you'll get still less by this move."

Such remarks were not calculated to raise Ernest's spirits, and, as Parkyns said no more, they walked on to the office in

silence. A letter was lying there for Ernest, in the handwriting of Mr. Hammer, and, conjecturing its purport, he tore it open, and read as follows :—

“ Sir,

“ I am requested by Mr. Colville to inform you that he has no further occasion for your services.

“ Your obedient servant,

“ I. I. HAMMER.”

“ Well, what news ?” asked Parkyns.

Ernest handed him the letter.

“ I told you so,” said Parkyns, running his eye over the contents. “ My dear fellow, NEVER TEACH YOUR GRANDMOTHER !”

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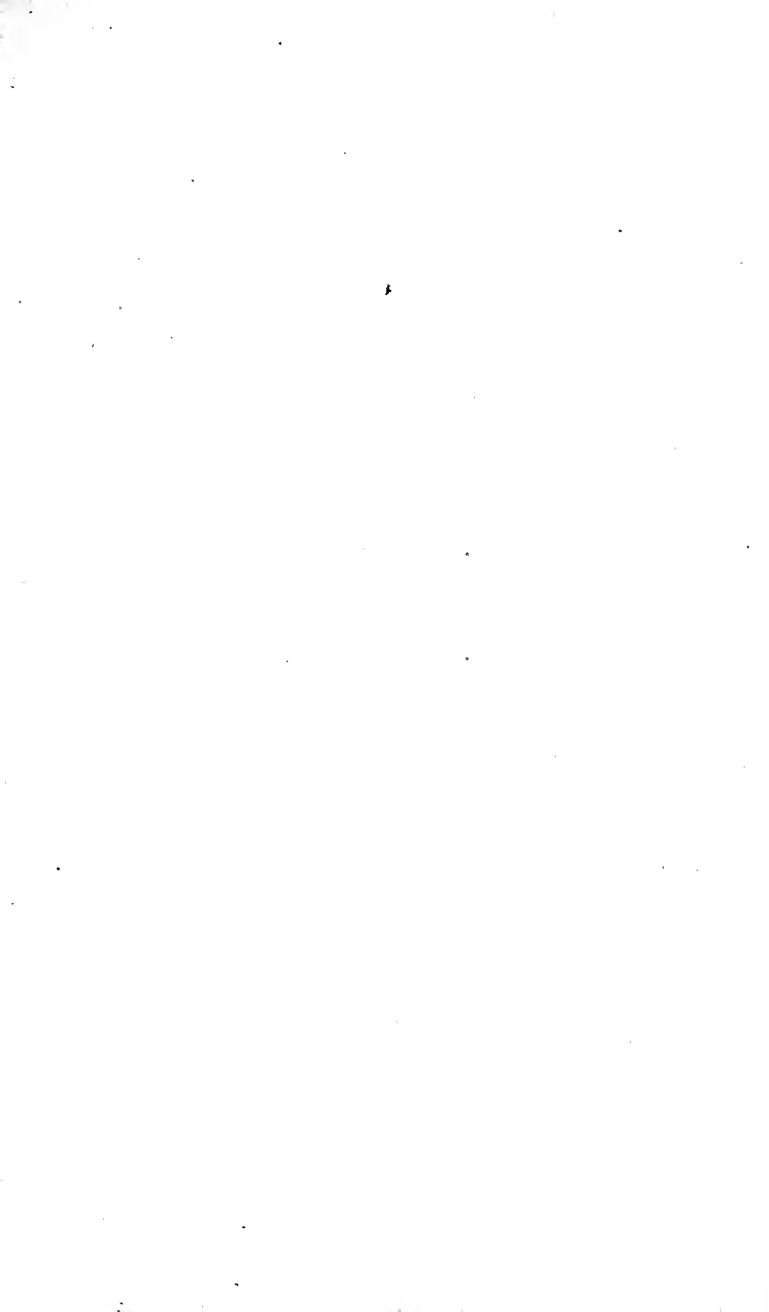
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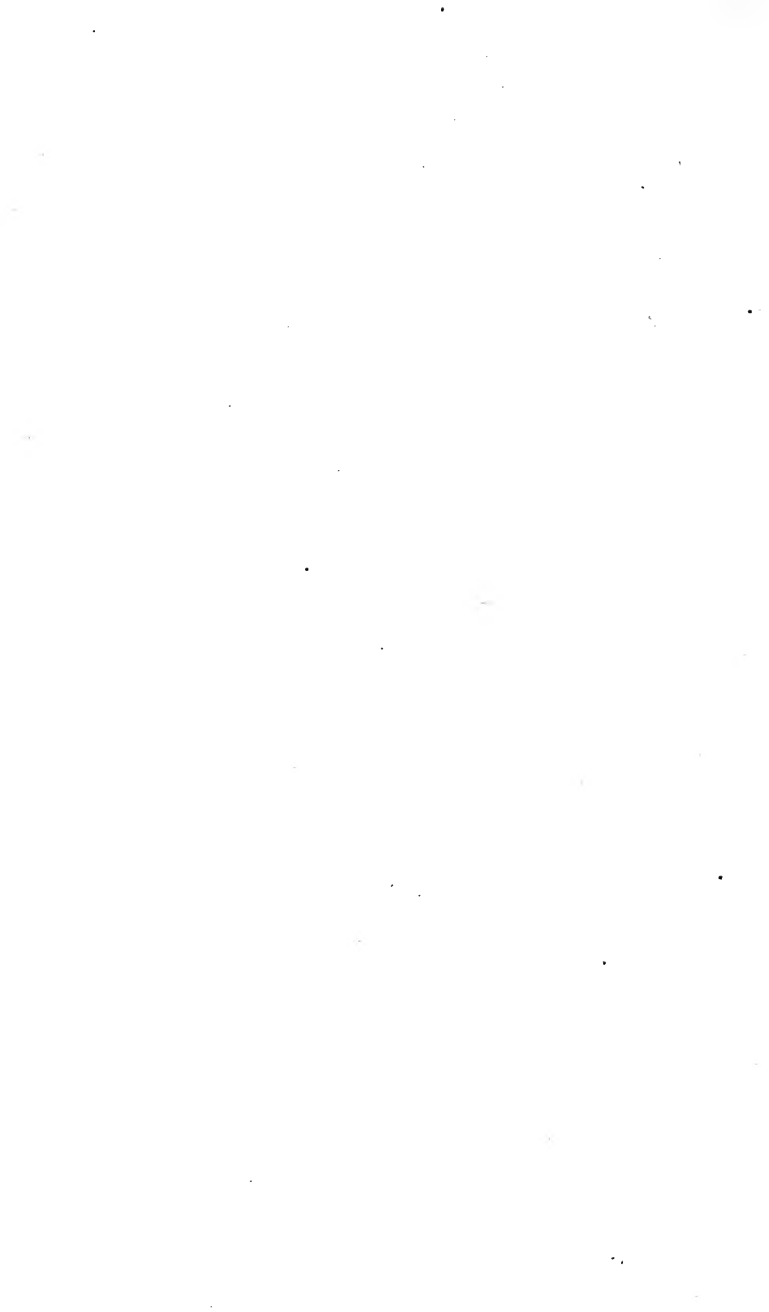
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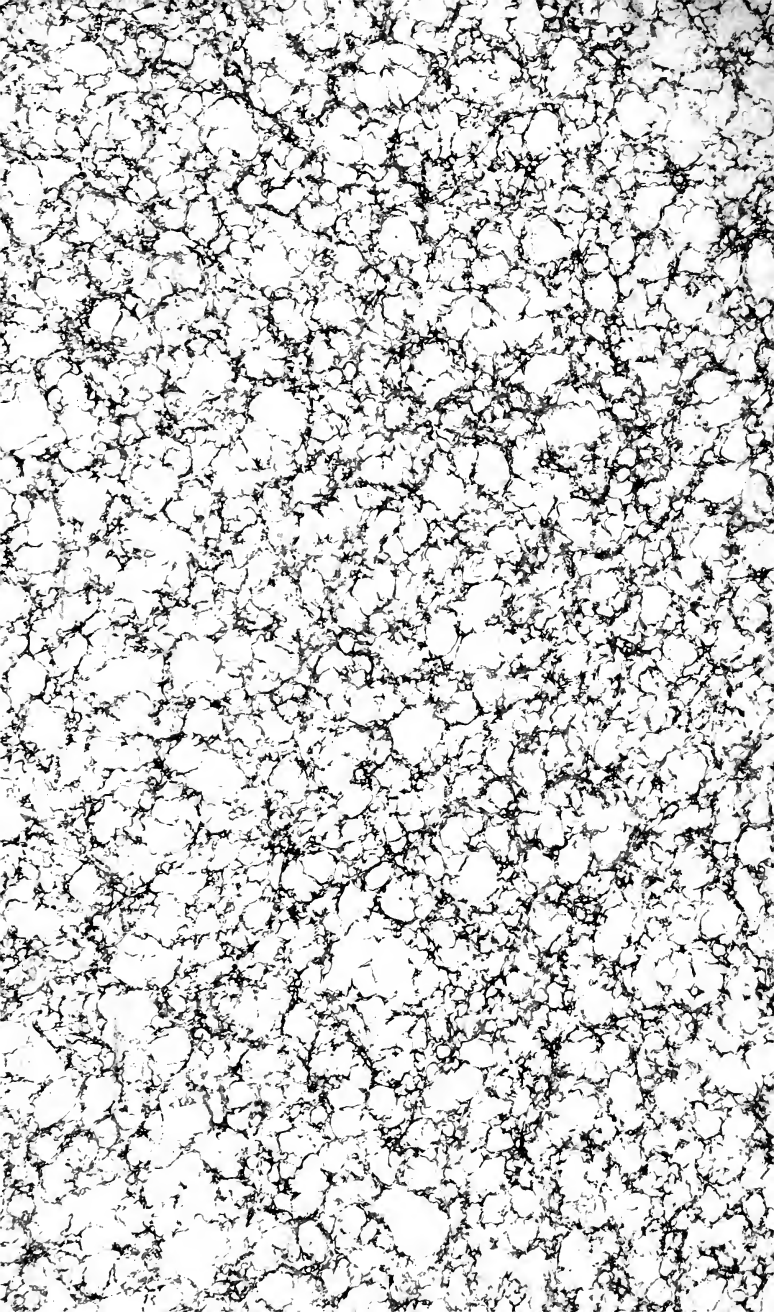
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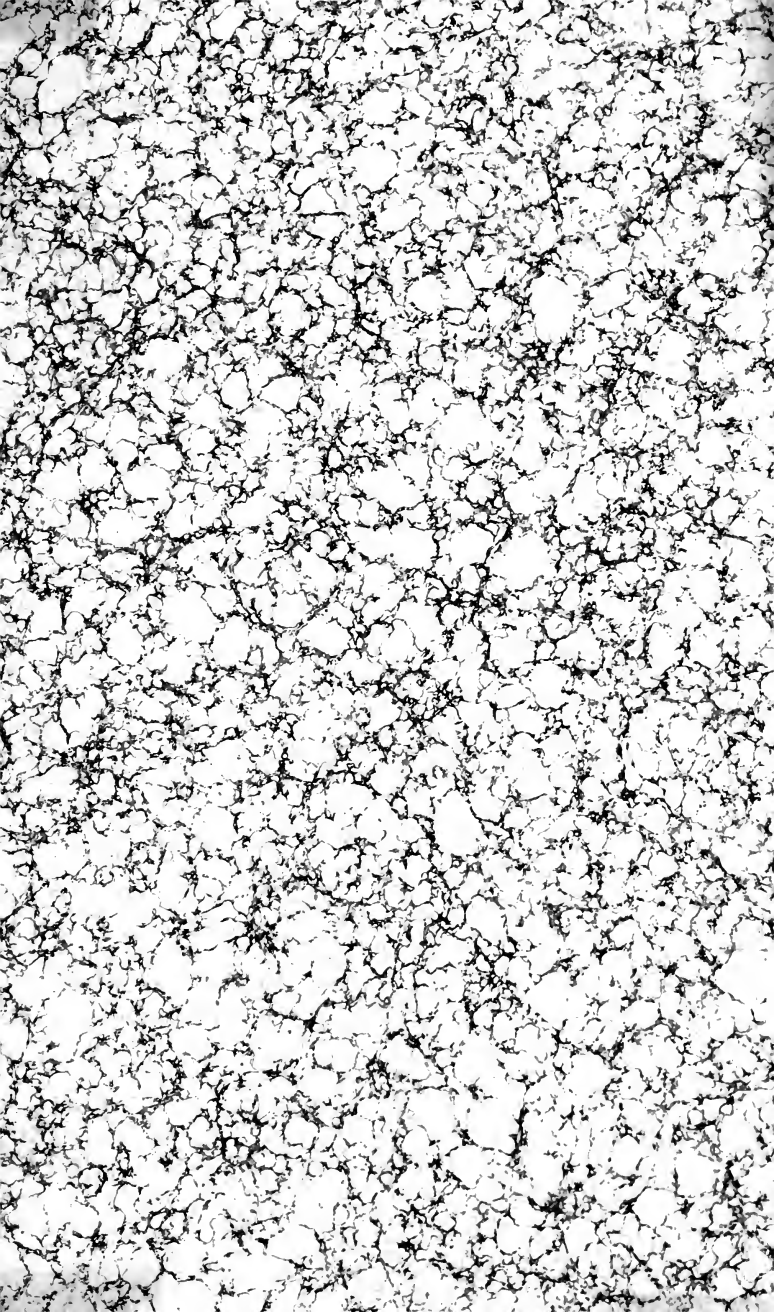
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